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MEMORIALS OF EDWIN HATCH, D.D.

God gives us almost every day
new & sad experience wherewith to test us.
Always yours sincerely
Edwin Hatch

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MEMORIALS

OF

EDWIN HATCH, D.D.,

SOMETIME READER IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, AND RECTOR OF PURLEIGH.

EDITED BY HIS BROTHER.

For me—to have made one soul
The better for my birth;
To have added but one flower
To the garden of the earth;

To have struck one blow for truth
In the daily fight with lies;
To have done one deed of right
In the face of calumnies;

To have sown in the souls of men
One thought that will not die—
To have been a link in the chain of life:
Shall be immortality.

EDWIN HATCH.

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PREFACE.

NOT for the first time does the sad duty devolve upon me of sending forth to the world some memorials of a beloved brother suddenly called away in the midst of ever-increasing work in the Lord's vineyard. The circumstances under which my younger brother's distinguished career was abruptly closed are referred to at length in one of the Sermons (XI.) in the present volume. And now, with touching coincidence, he who, twelve years ago, spoke so pathetically of "a glorious light that had shone and passed away," has himself, with hardly less suddenness, been ushered into the eternal presence of the Sun of Righteousness. Of such devoted fellow-workers, "lovely and pleasant in their lives," and in their death not long divided, it may assuredly be said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow them."

The Sermons are placed in chronological order, extending over the whole period of my brother's thirty years' ministry. They were delivered, as will be seen, upon very varied occasions, and to widely different classes of people. For if the preacher seemed to breathe his native air most freely in the University pulpit or in Westminster Abbey, it may be said also of him, as was once said of his Master, "The common people heard him gladly." Not the least impressive Sermon is that, for example, which was addressed, in simple language, to an agricultural congregation on the Yorkshire moors (*vide* Sermon VIII.); or another (XVI.) delivered to an overflowing multitude of artizans in a manufacturing district. Indeed, his wonderful power of adaptation may be accounted as one of my brother's most remarkable gifts. Some of the Sermons have already been printed in separate form; but with regard to the remainder it is scarcely necessary for me to say that they were not written with the least view to publication, and thus lack the keen revision of the author's critical pen.

Although it is the intention of my lamented

brother's widow to publish his Life, for the compilation of which there is happily abundant material, I have felt constrained to include in this volume some of the spontaneous tributes of affection and veneration which have already appeared.

SAMUEL C. HATCH.

CLYDE HOUSE, BLACKHEATH, S.E.
Christmas Day, 1889.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

THE following obituary notice is from *The Times*, the writer quoted in the concluding paragraphs being, it is understood, the Master of Balliol :—

"We regret to announce the unexpected death of Edwin Hatch, D.D., Rector of Purleigh, in Essex, and during the last five years Reader in Ecclesiastical History at Oxford. The sad event took place at his residence in Oxford on the evening of Sunday, November 10th, from a combined attack of pleurisy and heart disease. Dr. Hatch was in the fifty-fifth year of his age. He had been educated at King Edward's School, Birmingham, and was afterwards a scholar of Pembroke College, Oxford. He took a second class in Classics in 1857, and obtained the Ellerton Prize in 1858. After a residence in Canada as professor and head of a College, he returned to Oxford in 1867 and became the Vice-Principal of St. Mary Hall, a post which he held until four years ago. At the time of his death he was engaged on two unfinished works—(1) the *Hibbert Lectures for the Year* 1888, of which the subject was the connexion of Greek philosophy with early Christianity; (2) *A Concordance to the Septuagint* —a work of stupendous labour, to which he devoted the best years of his life. Of the first of these two

works the greater part, and of the second several sheets, are already in print. His other writings are the Bampton Lectures, delivered in 1880, which have received the singular honour of being translated into German by his friend Professor Harnack; and a volume of essays on Biblical Greek, published at the beginning of this year. He was also the author of innumerable articles in reviews, magazines, and dictionaries. A few months ago he gave an address by request to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. A distinguished resident member of the University writes:—

"'Dr. Hatch was a man of great force of mind and of great learning. In the days of his youth he had had to make a brave struggle for education and independence. The effect of this never altogether left him, and strengthened his character. It was wonderful how he found time to accumulate his stores of knowledge; for during the greater part of the day he was engaged in teaching, and his literary work was done between whiles in a life which was never free from interruptions. No one ever carried on original researches under more discouraging circumstances. Yet he was a thinker as well as a reader, and was very accurate. He was also a most pleasant companion, being very ready to talk on his own subjects as well as on the interests of the day. The power of his memory was very striking in conversation. He brought into the University many new topics, on which he threw a light by the clearness of his mind. There was, too, a great kindness and humanity about him, especially shown towards persons who had met with misfortune partly through their own fault.

"'For many years his talents were, perhaps, not appreciated by the University so much as they deserved to be, but he never complained of this, or attributed his want of success to anyone but himself. He never gave a thought to the question how his writings might affect his chances of preferment in the Church. Upon that subject he had no illusions, nor did he feel any soreness about it. He recognized gratefully the kindness and consideration with which he had been received by the Bishop of his diocese. He was a lover of the truth, and would have thought it a rich reward of his studies and of his life if he could have dissipated some of the clouds which darkened ecclesiastical history.

"'To his friends, to the University, to theology, his death is a loss which cannot be easily replaced. No Englishman of the present generation has given greater promise of becoming a distinguished theologian. There is always something pathetic in an eminent man being taken away at the time when he is beginning to gather the fruits of his labours. His library, his unfinished manuscripts, his various collections remain; but the spirit which animated them is fled. His place is vacant, and the work which he commenced has to be completed by another. He who would take it up and continue it in the same spirit must read ecclesiastical history anew, without any prejudice or colour of opinion, in the "dry light" of the most ancient documents.'"

The venerable BISHOP OF ST. ALBANS, Dr. Hatch's diocesan, writes:—

"His great abilities and his singular modesty always struck me very forcibly. And there was a great charm

in his manner and in his *smile*. It grieves me now that I saw so little of him when he was so near a neighbour; but we were both of us, in our different ways, constantly occupied. We lived apart, but there was a link between us—a link which death cannot sever."

At the close of his sermon before the University of Oxford, the Rev. W. W. Jackson, M.A., Rector of Exeter College, said:—

"Here this sermon should have ended; but since it was written a calamity has befallen us to which I cannot but refer. Dr. Edwin Hatch has been removed by death after a brief illness, when it seemed that the brightest and most fruitful period of his career still lay before him. The indefatigable worker is at rest. The pen has dropped from the busy hand; the active brain is still. It is hard even now to realise that his life's work has all come to an end. I will not speak as a friend might be allowed to speak of a friend. Nor is this the time, if I had the power, to estimate the value of his contributions to theology. But every one here can have only one feeling of sorrow for the loss which his death has inflicted on theological learning in Oxford and in England. His example has done much to stimulate and to recommend the dispassionate study of facts, without which theology, like all other sciences, is but a sickly plant. His conclusions would not have been considered even by himself as more than stepping-stones. Many persons dissented from them; but every one must admire the pains and candour he showed in arriving at them. His unquestioned mastery of the

field which he had made his own, and his wide and accurate acquaintance with other branches of theology, enforced attention. He deserved a hearing because he never acquiesced in anything less than the best and most exact knowledge attainable. His was the same spirit as that of our great living divine, and commentator on S. Paul, the acknowledged leader of theological learning in England. Surely this spirit must ultimately prevail. Everything short of the truth must vanish away. Systems in which facts are suppressed and distorted have their day. But they are in their nature transient. Truth alone can ultimately endure, and only in the truth is final agreement possible. May there never be wanting a succession of English theologians who, with no blinding prepossessions, shall set themselves to learn the will of God as it is revealed in the facts of history, of literature, of human nature, and the constitution of the world! If the unwearied industry and devotion of the friend whom we lament shall help others to realise the high ideal of a student's duty after which he strove himself, then he will not have lived in vain."

The following *In Memoriam* article, from the pen of the Rev. Professor Sanday, D.D., is contributed to the *Guardian*:—

"Few names could drop out of the roll of Oxford scholars and leave so wide a gap as that of Dr. Hatch. I doubt if any English theologian, not even excepting the great Cambridge group, was so well known or so highly thought of abroad. Yet the strong attraction which his work possessed for Continental scholars was

not due to any foreign proclivities in its author. He knew and appreciated what was done on the Continent, but he was himself essentially English both in the character of his mind and in method. I have never known any one who went through life with such large ideas cherished without wavering through evil report and good report. For years he worked on almost in solitude. He was independent—some might think, to a fault. Whatever subject he took in hand he must needs build up from the very foundations for himself. There were few conclusions which he was content to take at second hand. He worked on strictly inductive lines. His first step was to collect an immense quantity of *data*. Those who knew him chiefly by the Bampton Lectures, with all their compactness and self-restraint, would have but an imperfect idea of what those masses of *data* were. A better impression of them might be obtained from some of the remarkable articles, 'Holy Orders,' 'Ordination,' 'Parish,' 'Priest,' in the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. The subject of the Bamptons was only one of many on which he was engaged. Gradually his stores were being completed, and he was beginning to draw together the threads of a number of intricate and widely separated enquiries. Rarely has any one possessed the power of doing this in equal degree. Dr. Hatch was not one of those learned men who are overweighted with their learning. His was emphatically an architectonic mind, which could sketch in broad bold lines the salient features of his subject. And the filling in was a model of lucidity and precision. With him neither was the whole sacrificed to the parts nor the parts to

the whole. It is long since we have had a writer so nervous and masculine. The more quiet it was, the less occasion there was for rhetoric, the more did the massive proportions of his style appear. I doubt if it was ever seen to better advantage than in the little volume on *Mediæval Institutions*, and in the *Essays on Biblical Greek*.

"The subjects to which Dr. Hatch had paid special attention fall into five or six groups:—(1) The history of Christian institutions; (2) in connection with this the rise of canon law; (3) the history of Christian worship as expressed in the early Liturgies; (4) the philology and lexicography of Biblical Greek; (5) as a side inquiry springing out of this the history of philosophical terms, especially in the Stoics and Philo; (6) on a larger scale the history of ideas and practice at certain marked epochs, such as the first three Christian centuries and the Carlovingian Reformation.

"The first of these groups is perhaps that with which Dr. Hatch's fame is most commonly associated; it is represented by the articles in the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, by the Bampton Lectures, and by the volume on the *Growth of Church Institutions*, which was intended to be the precursor of a much larger and fuller treatment. Both these latter works received the somewhat unusual honour of translation into German —an honour which acquired additional significance from the fact that the translator, Dr. Harnack, was himself an ardent student of the same periods and subjects. Another eminent scholar, the veteran Dr. Weizsäcker, wrote in terms of warm praise of the Bampton Lectures; and, indeed, both books met with

general recognition in Germany. Dr. Hatch had hoped to return to the subject of the Bamptons, but did not wish to do so until he could deal with it in a comprehensive way.

"Much of his material was derived from a close study of the ecclesiastical canons. He had worked elaborately at the canons of the early councils, not only in their Greek texts, but in the various Latin versions. He often utilised his too brief and hurried excursions to the Continent to examine MSS. of these.

"Another study which he had prosecuted with equal diligence was that of the early Liturgies. These, again, were approached by the same comparative method, and the eye of the critical historian was quick to note changes and phases of growth and development. Whether the materials left on these heads are in a state that might possibly admit of publication is more than I can say. I fear that the hand and the knowledge of the author would be too greatly missed.

"In regard to Biblical Greek happily much has been saved. The great *Concordance to the LXX.* is so nearly launched, and its plan must be by this time so fully matured, that there is every reason to hope for its successful completion, and the *Essays* published this year contain at least a gleaning of general results. It would be a mistake to look upon these essays as professing to be in any way exhaustive. They were rather a contribution to the study of materials gathered at first hand. For many years I know that Dr. Hatch had contemplated a philological commentary on the Gospels, which would have been full of original matter. This too, I rather think, was to have been taken up in the near

future; but I do not know whether anything had been completed.

"In his search for illustrative matter Dr. Hatch had turned with special interest to the Stoic and Philonian philosophies. These attracted him also for their own sakes. There was a strong philosophic bent in his mind, and he had all a philosopher's grasp and precision in the handling of ideas.

"It is probable that the collections made in this direction will have been largely used in the recent Hibbert Lectures. I was, unfortunately, myself disabled when these were being delivered, and heard only one of the latest of them. The subject was extremely large and difficult, and weakened health had, I fear, interfered rather seriously with the final revision which the lectures were undergoing.

"These lectures will show what Dr. Hatch understood by history. With him it was no mere surface-study. He was always penetrating to causes, and to the larger movements which lay behind the ebb and flow of events. His range of historical knowledge was extraordinary. There was no period with which he had not a very considerable familiarity—a familiarity always marked by the same philosophic breadth of view. These gifts naturally made him an excellent examiner—always clear, always definite, always going to the heart of his subject, and covering well its different aspects. In this respect, as in all others, he will be very greatly missed. He took a deep interest in the working of the Theological School, and his colleagues know how much he did to raise and improve it. In the recent revision, and to some extent reconstruction,

of the subjects for examination his was the moving spirit.

"When it is remembered that in addition to all this he bore on his shoulders the work of a large and distant parish, that his duties as secretary to the Boards of Faculties and as editor of the *University Gazette* took up nearly the whole of his afternoons, that there was hardly a subject of public importance, whether political, economical, social, or moral, that did not interest him, we shall not wonder, however much we may lament, that a constitution not naturally strong broke down beneath the strain.

"Dr. Hatch was what would be called self-reliant by nature. He could not divest himself of the consciousness of strength. All he did bore the impress of a powerful individuality. And he had thought so much and so long upon the subjects on which he expressed himself that he did not pay much regard to criticisms which he knew had no such weight behind them. But he was perfectly ready to admit well-founded corrections; and he had too firm a faith in the advance of science to expect things to remain just where he had left them. We, too, may recognise this without undervaluing his own contributions to the advance. Few men whose period of production was cut short so abruptly have made greater.

"Although the occasion of controversy, Dr. Hatch was not himself a controversialist. The Bampton Lectures were sharply criticised, but to the best of my recollection he made but one rather indirect reply. Neither in public nor in private did he show any impatience. He seemed to be prepared to find himself

misunderstood, and content to let the injustice right itself. He was singularly free from pettiness of every kind. No personal considerations ever interfered with his desire for truth. Of late the isolation in which he had at one time worked seemed passing away. He was encouraged by the marks of high regard which reached him both from far and near. And I know how much he was touched by little signs of friendliness and consideration in those who did not see eye to eye with him. The gathering round his grave on Friday last showed how deep and real this sympathy was, and how widely it was shared by men of every shade of opinion. Dr. Hatch was not one of those who can work only in the sunshine; but the sunshine came or was coming. Slowly, but surely, he was winning his way to the place which was his due; and it is a pathetic consolation to think that his last days were spent in hopeful looking forward to the years which have been denied him."

The Rev. T. K. CHEYNE, D.D., Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, writes in the *Oxford Magazine*:—

"There was a special sadness in the regret which brought so many together in Holywell Cemetery last Friday afternoon. The blow fell so suddenly that, till we were summoned to pay the last tribute of respect, we could hardly believe that Edwin Hatch was no longer working among us. We had ventured to hope that the high-minded patience which had forborne to pluck the fruits of study before they were ripe was to issue in other and still nobler monuments of learning

than those of which we were so justly proud. That the restless worker 'might cease to be before his pen had glean'd his teeming brain' none of us ever thought. Ranke's fair lot was no doubt exceptional, but Hatch was only just fifty-four, and we knew how much there was maturing in that ample intellect. It was only six years ago that he was appointed a University Reader, and we saw him beginning to found a school of students, trained in critical methods, of whom yet greater things might be hoped. Those who have attended Hatch's Lectures on Church History testify with one voice to their stimulating character, and to the singular intellectual power which they displayed. What a grasp of history! What a unique power of connecting and comparing ill-understood phenomena! What an eye for the gradual growth of institutions, and for the Church-historical significance of inscriptions, of the canons in all their changing forms, of codes of laws and capitularies, of the minutest contemporary records! Hatch's introductory lecture, printed in 1885, called forth from Professor Harnack the expression of the earnest wish that the succeeding lectures might in time be given to the public. One may hope that even now the wish may, to some extent, be gratified. The lectures on the Canons and on the Carlovingian Period have produced such an impression on the hearers that if there be any corrected notes of them they can scarcely be withheld. Hatch certainly meant to publish something more elaborate on the growth of Church institutions than the lectures (popular, but bristling with facts and inferences) published on this subject in 1887.

"The story of Hatch's life is simple but pathetic.

He was born at Derby, September 4th, 1835, and was educated at King Edward's School, Birmingham, which has also produced our two leading exegetes (Bishop Lightfoot and Canon Westcott), and the present scholarly Archbishop of Canterbury. He graduated in 1857 (second class, Lit. Hum.), gained the Ellerton, and was ordained in 1858; was from 1859 to 1866 Professor of Classics in Trinity College, Toronto, and Rector of the High School, Quebec, and from 1867 to 1885 Vice-Principal of St. Mary Hall. In 1883, from a genuine love of pastoral work, shown long since when he preached as a young man in the open air in East London, he accepted the not very lucrative living of Purleigh in Essex, where he chiefly spent his vacations. In 1880 he became Bampton and also Grinfield Lecturer, and in 1888 delivered the Hibbert Lectures in London and in Oxford. How much besides he did officially, all Oxford knows. And what follows from these facts? That Hatch had no easy life, and that his stores of learning were acquired in the intervals of hard tutorial and other official work. One feels his removal the more acutely because of the unusual though to us quite intelligible slowness of his development. With so much routine work he could not step forward with the rapidity of some scholars, whose peer he may well be accounted. But in some ways Hatch doubtless gained by his long waiting time. He acquired a wide practical experience, a clearness of vision, and (if the phrase may be allowed) a certain cautious boldness which the recluse scholar does not often possess. When he was ready, and not before, he seized the great opportunity presented by the

Bampton Lectureship. The lectures of 1880 revealed a new scholar to the theological world in general, though students of the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* (1876-1880) must have appreciated the vast knowledge and critical judgment of the series of articles signed with the initials 'E. H.' It was the results of these articles which formed the basis of the Lectures, the subject of which was 'The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches.' We all remember the storm that greeted this remarkable work, which has done so much to stimulate Church-historical studies, but for a time seemed to be more appreciated in Germany than in England.

"How far was the Lecturer himself responsible for the opposition which he encountered? Was he too dogmatic—too self-confident—too regardless of the labours of other Church historians? It has been sometimes thought so. And yet, one may now ask, Could Hatch have spoken otherwise than he did? It was his fortune to approach his subject from an entirely new side, and apply a method which had till then only been applied to secular history. He was an eager and enthusiastic researcher, and was almost as much fascinated by the inscriptions of the Roman Empire as that eminent explorer of Asia Minor who was for a time lent to Oxford; and if even one so free from theological colour as Professor Ramsay, after expounding the bearings of the inscriptions on early Church History to the excellent Cambridge Church Society, could not escape the charge of being 'unsympathetic' (see the *Guardian*), who can be surprised that a theologian in the robes of an archæological professor

was overwhelmed with even worse accusations? Hatch might of course have paused on every page to limit and qualify his assertions by some remark adapted to minds slower and less many-sided than his own. But could this great master of style have so injured the effectiveness of his work? Could this pioneer be expected to realise the difficulties of those who followed him? Naturally Hatch felt the sting of some of the charges brought against him, and, naturally too perhaps, did not always avoid sharp words. But the bitterness on both sides was, one may think, only temporary. Generosity is not extinct among theologians, and a recent work on the Christian Ministry proves that Hatch's contributions (for which he never claimed finality) are not only highly valued, but drawn upon by one of the most competent on the side opposed to his own.

"The opinion entertained of Hatch not only by the northern theologians who conferred upon him a D.D. degree, but by German scholars such as Harnack and Weizsäcker, is by this time well known. But a passage from a private letter written by the former to the writer of this sketch may be quoted, without his permission indeed, but with a full sense that its publication will meet with his approval.

"'I loved and respected Hatch. I saw in his activity the future of Church historical studies in England; and in his learning that of England's great old theologians Ussher and Pearson lived to me again. I have never found a Church historian whose judgment I so much trusted as his, and never have I met with a fellow-worker whose ways of looking at things harmonised so much with my own. Although our course of develop-

ment was as different as the lands in which we dwelt, the circle of our interests, our method, and our goal were the same. When we spoke together of early Church History, our thoughts met with wonderful regularity in all the chief points. It seldom happened that we were of a different opinion; and when this did occur, we were soon at one again. In conversation I saw myself helped forward in the best manner, without being compelled to give up my independently won conviction. He was a great writer. Few books have been written so masterly as his Lectures. But above all, he was a glorious man, whose loss I shall never cease to mourn.'

"We might well stop here. But Hatch did the work of several men, and who will chide the writer for claiming a little further space? These Church-historical writings are not the only monuments of this great scholar.

"It would be wrong to pass over the remarkable exposition of the Pauline theology in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (art. "Paul"). Many may differ from the author's apparent critical presuppositions, or be disappointed at the brevity with which very important ideas are necessarily treated, but the candid and exact style of the work cannot fail greatly to impress the reader. Perhaps indeed it was rash to enter on a field which he could not hope at present thoroughly to break up. But no such criticism can be passed on his next literary engagement. His appointment as Grinfield Lecturer in 1880 enabled him to utilise a mass of researches which he had made in later Greek in general, and that of the Bible in parti-

cular. The substance of his lectures was published in the present year under the title *Essays in Biblical Greek*. Future students of the Septuagint, whose interest may lie in the revision of the text, and especially in the character of the language, have now a specimen of the work they have to do. The book is almost all equally original, though at one point his way lies parallel to that of the brilliant Gustav Bickell. Simultaneously with these lectures, Hatch was deeply engaged on a Concordance to the Septuagint, undertaken by the Clarendon Press, and delighted in this opportunity of drawing out the scholarly gifts of his juniors. Of this great work but few sheets are unhappily yet in type, but it may be expected that those who worked under him will be able to complete the task in his own thorough manner and upon his own well-thought-out principles.

"Dr. Hatch's practical services to the University were, however, ungrudgingly rendered and most efficient. Nor can one say less of his labours as a college tutor; he was undeniably a first-rate teacher, and as kind as he was able. And surely no praise can be too high of his work in connexion with the Theological School. As an examiner he spared no pains to find out exactly what each candidate knew, and he was ever ready to judge a man upon the best side. His remarkable width of knowledge made him a tower of strength to his fellow-examiners. He believed moreover in theological study, when rightly pursued, as a liberal training for the mind. His efforts to make Oxford theology more thorough and critical were unceasing, and yet his willingness to co-operate with not less zealous but perhaps more cautious

colleagues was equally conspicuous. In fact, it was clear that his character mellowed as time went on, and his native gentleness and generosity took an ever greater range. He felt most kindly towards those who differed from him. He knew too that behind all intellectual differences there were precious truths common to him and to them. He was no cold anatomist of ecclesiastical organisms, but underneath the critic there was the Christian and the Churchman. He saw with distress 'the growing and inevitable sadness of our time' (see *Essay on Religious Progress* in a well-known Jubilee volume), but he trusted in the future with a chastened Christian optimism. In his own way he was indeed a strong Churchman. No one can doubt this who reads the concluding pages of his sermon on 'Individualism and Ecclesiasticism,'* one sentence of which (see p. 280, on 'Ephraim and Judah') is strangely parallel to the striking close of his speech at the opening of Mansfield;† or who has noticed his warm sympathy with all organised Christian efforts for the elevation of the poor. And even judging him as a critic, ought one to overlook the passages of restrained but fervent Christian eloquence in his famous Lectures, or the beautiful concluding paragraph in his inaugural lecture as a Reader, where he says that though criticism of Church history cannot be barred, yet 'we must tread our path with reverence and sympathy,' for 'the facts which we have to learn are facts about that which is in a special sense Divine within us.' Yes; he was not only a critic but a

* Sermon XXI. in the present volume. † *Vide* p. xxxiv.

Churchman; not only a Churchman but one who had a deep inner life of his own. He was no 'light half-believer of our casual creeds.' A sad event in his family history had brought very near to him the uncertainty of life, and the Christian view of God was a necessity of his existence."

The *Christian World* alludes especially to Dr. Hatch's association with the opening of Mansfield College—his last public appearance:—

"Oxford is beneath the shadow of a great and irreparable loss. On Sunday evening there passed away to 'where beyond these voices there is peace' the University Reader in Ecclesiastical History, Dr. Edwin Hatch. Free Churchmen, both in England and in the larger world without, have long regarded Dr. Hatch as one of their best and most sympathetic friends. His wide experience of life, his marvellously profound insight into the past history of religion, and his life-long struggle for a wider freedom of thought and of faith within this ancient University which he loved so well, and thereby within the Anglican Church, to which his allegiance was always most dutiful, had taught him to recognise how much good there was without the pale of his own Church, and how absolutely essential to the true well-being of religion was the existence of the Free Churches. His position was indeed unique, and was never acceptable to a large proportion of his fellow-Churchmen. As a leading Broad Churchman in Oxford, and also as a leader among academic Liberals, he fought a hard and strenuous battle during the days of change and reform. Few men suffered more for the

cause of progress and freedom. And now death has taken him just as the day was dawning and the fair fruits of victory were beginning to ripen. No one rejoiced more in the advent of Mansfield College than Dr. Hatch. It meant to him, perhaps, far more than to any other old Oxford resident. At length he saw a chance of a true and scientific school of Theology springing up in the University. At the last lecture which he ever gave he probably had a larger audience than he had ever before seen at one of his ordinary classes. Almost twenty Mansfield men were present. Those who were privileged to hear his last public speech at the breakfast to representative guests in Mansfield Hall (October 16th) will not soon forget his wise and kindly words.

"'You are rendering,' he said at the end of his brief speech, 'a service to the Church of England, and I believe to the University, by helping it to fulfil its ideal. The ideal of the Christian Church in its largest sense is the ideal which I find, not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old. It is the ideal of a vast community in which Judah shall not swallow Ephraim nor Ephraim Judah, but Judah and Ephraim shall live side by side, each working out its common purpose, but in which Judah no longer vexes Ephraim nor Ephraim Judah. In coming here you are helping the Church of England to do its work by doing yours, showing how it is possible in actual practice and in close local contiguity to realise by working together in a common spirit that which is the New Testament ideal—one Lord, one faith, one baptism.'

"These words were most truly characteristic of the

man. Born in the year 1835, Dr. Hatch led a life full of activity and hard labour. He was originally a member of Pembroke College, and his first labours after graduating and taking orders were among the poor of the East-end of London. Although duty called him into a very different sphere before long, yet his old affection for work among the poor of large cities never died out. He took great interest in all modern movements for the help of the poor, and frequently in later years showed the utmost personal interest in the West London Mission and its leader, Mr. Hugh Price Hughes, several times appearing on the platform of St. James's Hall on Sunday afternoons."

The Rev. Canon Driver, D.D., Regius Professor of Hebrew, contributes an elaborate article to the *Classical Review*, the concluding paragraphs of which are as follow:—

"Dr. Hatch's Bampton Lectures have shared, with those of Dr. Liddon, the singular honour of having been deemed worthy of translation into German. It is an additional testimony to the high qualities which they exhibit that the translation was the work of one of the most distinguished of German Professors of Ecclesiastical History, Professor Harnack, who in an introduction prefixed to his translation has explained the grounds which induced him to undertake it, viz. (stated briefly) their comprehensive and lucid exposition of the subject with which they deal. There may be aspects of the subject which Dr. Hatch has not made sufficiently prominent, as there may also be elements of the evidence which he has under-estimated

but his principal opponent—a thoroughly courteous and honourable opponent—the Rev. C. Gore, while criticising his work on these grounds, cheerfully recognizes (*vide The Church and the Ministry*, 1889, p. vii.) the great value of the historical materials collected by Dr. Hatch, both in this and in his other writings. In Church History he was intimately acquainted with the mediæval not less than with the ancient period; and in his capacity of Reader in Ecclesiastical History lectured frequently on the Canon Law.

"Dr. Hatch took a warm and active interest in University matters. That practical ends were not undervalued by him may be judged from the *Students' Handbook to the University and Colleges of Oxford*, a manual of information for the guidance of students, which was compiled by him originally in 1873, and has since passed through several editions. As a colleague, whether on a Board of Studies or a Committee, or as an Examiner, his knowledge of the subject in hand, and his clear sense of the issue involved, rendered his criticism and advice very valuable. The high ideal which he set to himself, he sought to impress upon the studies of the Unversity: while he was lenient and considerate towards those men—always the majority in a University—whose talents were few, he held that a high standard of excellence should be exacted of those who had the ability requisite to attain it. He strove especially to raise the level and improve the quality of theological study in the University. Quite recently some substantial improvements in the course of study prescribed for the Theological School, suggested by his recent experience as an examiner, had

been introduced through his instrumentality; and upon the last occasion on which the Board appointed to regulate these studies had the benefit of his counsel he was still anxiously at work promoting the same end.

"In character Dr. Hatch was amiable, patient, disinterested, and scrupulously just; no disappointment or academical defeat ever left its mark upon his temper. His life was dedicated to the cause of learning—to its advancement by himself, to its encouragement in others; and these ends he pursued with unremitting energy and perseverance. English scholarship could not have lost a brighter example, nor English theology a worthier, a more earnest, or an abler representative."

At a memorial service held in the Chapel of Mansfield College, the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn, founding his discourse on Gen. iv. 9, Psalm xxiii. 4, and 2 Tim. iv. 7, thus feelingly alluded to the loss of his colleague and friend:—

"This College has lost a steadfast friend, the University an illustrious son and teacher, the Church of England a faithful minister, the cause of learning and historical research an eminent master, while the impalpable, yet all too real, things we name truth, freedom, progress, brotherhood, have to mourn the fall of a foremost man and trusted leader. This is not the place where men ought easily to be praised; yet we owe him too much to leave our obligations unacknowledged. When God bestows a great gift on His Church we do well to be gratified; when His Church loses a gifted son, will He chide us if we mourn?

"There was something to our human weakness

strangely pathetic in the death of our friend. Here was a man of strong capabilities, possessed of immense resources, of treasures accumulated through years of strenuous yet silent toil, as eager as he was competent for work, taken away just as what seemed to him his hour and his opportunity had come. Life had not been to him an easy or a gentle thing : what men call preferment or patronage did not seek him out or smile upon him, or do anything to make his way agreeable. He had to endure hardness, and he endured it as became a Christian man. With the true scholar's enthusiasm, which many waters cannot quench, he laboured at his great subject in moments saved from between the hours of tutorial drudgery, at once earning the means of living and accumulating stores of learning that he might the better serve the truth he loved. After the years of patient acquisitive toil and slow ripening came the all too brief harvest, the season when his pen moved swiftly and scholars gathered round him to learn his method, examine his results, at once test and trace the process by which they were reached. When his Bampton lecture appeared it was hailed by Continental scholars as a work of sober and serious science, and as a sign that Oxford was losing its provincial temper and insular mind, and becoming in its religious studies Catholic in spirit and historical in method. Indeed, I would say that his method was his great contribution to modern knowledge. Nothing could have been more rigorous or exact : it was throughout comparative and historical. He studied all the contemporary factors of progress and change, and measured at once the rate of progress and the degree of change

by bringing at each successive point the later face to face with the earlier forms of doctrine, polity, and worship. His method was based on the law of development, was indeed but the scientific study of this law in its working and in its results. To him the churches were so many stupendous organisms living and growing within their respective environments, and his problem was to discover the conditions under which, and the forces through which, the largest and the most complex of these organisms had come to life. Development was not to him what it was to Newman, the multiplication of dogmata, in order to the preservation of a dogma or a process of aggregation justified as a thing logically necessary to a given result, but it was a living growth, a process of life, that could be known only by observation, by watching the interplay of organism and environment, the action of the Church upon its historical conditions, the reaction of the conditions upon the Church ; as a consequence it became possible to show how the immense and highly-articulated system men call Catholicism had been built up, and at once to explain and appraise it by the exhibition of the forces that made it and the process through which it had become. It could be granted to no man to do the whole work, but abiding gratitude is due to the master who showed how best the method could be used and what things it could achieve.

"Yet the method and what it enabled him to accomplish was not the most remarkable feature of his work ; more remarkable was the large idea of history that underlay it, the large conception of the Church and kingdom of Jesus Christ that gave it purpose and

meaning. He never fell into what would have been a tremendous mistake, identifying the Church whose organisation he traced with the kingdom of God. Catholicism and the Catholic Church were to him not likes but opposites. But he was so intent in using his method to work out his results that he often failed to make explicit the qualifying ideas present to his own mind, and it is the function of the critic to assume that ideas not made explicit are ideas absent or denied. He strongly believed that the Church of Christ was as broad as Christian men, pious and godly men, consciously saved and visibly blest of God were of the society of the redeemed members of Christ's body, citizens of the City of God ; and the polity that denied this of any could be no true polity, or in any sense or respect essential to the Church. To him there was no heresy so great as to say that a man whose very being was a living witness to a present and indwelling Christ was, because his conscience bade him stand outside a given ecclesiastical organisation, therefore outside Christ's visible Church, or even without the fullest communion of the saints and fellowship of the Spirit. The man who says there is no Church speaks falsely, but not so falsely as the man who says, There is no Church but mine. And our late friend patiently worked to show how many forces that were of the earth, how many influences from the ancient world, its customs, thought, usages, institutions, ideas, and ideals had contributed to form the constitution, system, order, and orders of the society that called itself the Catholic Church. But he did not labour to show this for its own sake, or as a curious point in the national history

of ecclesiastical institutions; it was to set free the larger, the more gracious and catholic idea of a Church that included all the holy, and was rigorous in excluding only the evil and the bad.

"But enough of the work; it does not become me to speak here in Oxford of the services he rendered to the University. Other and more competent men will do that; but of one thing I may speak—the great desire, nay the ambition he had to make the Theological School a school worthy of theology. He loved theology, thought it more than any other academic study needed trained faculty, believed that it should be the last of all schools to become a refuge for the intellectually necessitous, or a mere gateway to profession and place. And so he wished to see it raised to where it ought to stand, at the head of all our academic culture, the school for which the humanities and history only could prepare. The day is not yet come when this ideal can be realised, but realised it must be if theology is to live. Permit only a word or two as to the man. It is not easy to speak here with just frankness, yet becoming reserve, of a man we have learned to love. Yet if I had not loved him I could not have dared to speak of him here. With what he seemed on the public arena we are not concerned; with what he was as a man and a friend we are. He could be, and often was, swift and sharp in speech, but nothing more marked him than the gentle and even generous way he judged the men to whom he was opposed. He was a devout and reverent man; indeed, I have known few things more touching than the simple devoutness of some of his spontaneous family prayers. He did not love an

academic or cloistered religion; he was anxious that men who were being trained in religious knowledge should be exercised in religious service. He followed with keenest sympathy and approval the efforts to reach the lapsed, to rescue the fallen, to apply the healing touch and ameliorative spirit of religion to our social diseases and depravities. Nor are these judgments simply mine; a friend, a learned and capable teacher of men, who had heard him described as hard, unspiritual, negative, a mere comparative anatomist of bodies ecclesiastical, came to know him, to stay in the same house with him, and to see him under the most searching lights that can fall upon the spirit and character of a man, now writes to me: 'I cannot tell you what a gratification it is to me that I thus knew and had learned to value him. I had previously no right conception of his honesty and truth and earnestness, or of that kind gentleness which softened all. I shall now treasure his memory as a sacred trust, and hope that it may help me to try to be more like him.' So he became to men that saw him face to face; to men who looked from a distance he was the scholar, the historical student, the teacher, the man whose methods and conclusions men of large repute had disapproved; but to men who knew him from within he was a veracious, high-minded, tender-hearted friend, wise in counsel, candid in speech, helping the man that trusted him to bear his burden and do his work in the world. His loss has impoverished our present, but has enriched our past with happy memories and our future with sacred hopes. Our dead is buried from our sight, but he lives to our faith, and we see him as

he dwells in the bosom of his God, looking a loving benediction to the friends of his earthly home. Farewell, loved brother; we can speak of thee in words that are thine own, wrung from the heart of thy sorrows when thou hadst to mourn a loved lost brother of thy flesh, but also of thy spirit :—

"'We lived the earthly life as one,
The happy years were spent
In perfectness of sympathy
And mutual content.

"'We thought one thought, we prayed one prayer,
We dreamed one dream of life,
And struggled upwards on one road
Of spiritual strife.

"'Then came the sudden sundering,
Body from spirit torn:
I lived awhile but half my life,
Maimed, widowed, and forlorn.

"''Twas only that my soul's dim sense
Was all too blind to see
That Death is Life—and did but bring
His spirit nearer me.

"'For when within God's House I stand
Too sad for worshipping,
My angel-brother sings for me
The songs I cannot sing.

"'And when in lone untravelled ways
My heart is cold with care,
He frames the words I cannot frame
In utterance of prayer.

"'And God, Who knows our fellowship,
Hears in the House of Love
A single voice from separate souls,
One here, and one above.'"

SERMON I.

OVERCOMING THE WORLD.

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[*Lewisham*, 1859.]

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."—1 JOHN v. 4.

IT would be impossible to sum up in nobler words the lesson of this Easter season.

On Good Friday, we seemed to be, with the Apostles and with the Master of the Apostles, in the extreme of anguish and desolation. The very darkest hour of history had come. The struggle of a Divine Life seemed to have ended in defeat. The dream of a regenerated society seemed to have vanished away.

And on Easter Day there came the sudden cry: "The Lord is risen!" What had seemed the crisis of defeat was changed into the crisis of victory. The darkest hour of the world's night was the hour before dawn.

Good Friday and Easter Day are the parable of history. Their story has been repeated again and again. The lesson which they teach is universally true. Not only the First Begotten of the Father, who struggled and overcame at Jerusalem, but at all times and in all places, in the wide sphere of human society

and in the narrower sphere of the individual soul, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."

What is the world? In the Apostle's time it meant, no doubt, the whole mass of human society, with the exception of the handfuls here and there of those who had embraced the Christian faith. The line of separation between the Christian and the non-Christian elements of society could be readily and sharply drawn. But it is not so now. The Church has leavened the world; the world has leavened the Church. The non-Christian element of society is no longer a distinct and definable aggregation of men. The world exists, but it is, so to speak, no longer visible and separable. Its existence is as real, but its form is vaguer. It is the sum of the many forces, principles, and tendencies which oppose and counteract the progress of the spirit and the spiritual. It exists not only *among* us, but *in* us. It is all that part of each one of us which gives a more or less active resistance to growth in goodness, in knowledge, and in sympathy; the sum of the influences of fashion, and prejudice, and selfishness: "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

In antithesis and antagonism to this, now as then, in both society and the individual, is that which "is born of God." And this, too, is hardly definable. For wherever good works, God works: and that which is born of Him gathers up into itself all the spiritual forces which lead towards holiness, all the mental forces which lead towards truth, all the gathered mass of

organisations and workings, of symbols and practices, of hopes and foreshadowings, which came forth from God and go back to Him. For all this the Apostle has one comprehensive expression, "our faith." For him, as for us, Christianity was the latest born of God's children; it summed up all that is divine in man. Between this and the world, between Christianity and the society which surrounded it, he implies a continual conflict, and he prophesies a certain victory.

The prophecy seemed a hazardous one. The conflict was apparently the most unequal that could be imagined. On the one side were the few Christians, broken up even in those early days by internal dissensions; on the other side was not only the very people in the midst of whom Christianity had arisen, but the vast organisation of the Roman Empire. Nation after nation had been crushed; and who were these few religious devotees that they should venture the prophecy of their victory?

And yet the prophecy was true. The faith which the Apostles preached, and which we profess, is the greatest power in human society. It has not annihilated its enemies. It has not made a wilderness, and called it peace. It has not rid its hosts of traitors and idlers and the crowd of camp-followers. It is still doing battle. But for all that, it has overcome, and is still overcoming.

There are two elements of it which seem to be especially victorious, and they are the same two elements which seem more than any others to approach to the

conception "whatsoever is born of God." The one is the spirit of love, which is the Christian law of the social life; the other is the spirit of truth, which is the Christian law of the intellectual life.

1. The ideal of society which the New Testament sets before us, is a society in which men shall do from mutual respect what they have hitherto done upon compulsion. It is a republic of unselfishness. It is a community in which the love of one's neighbour takes the place of, and supersedes the necessity of, the positive enactments, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not covet."

From this ideal we are still far removed, and yet we seem to be nearer to it than our fathers were a thousand years ago. There is a greater desire to relieve the burdens of the afflicted and the poor, an increasing effort to reform the criminal, a growing admission of the possible variety of human beliefs, a lessening disposition to settle all international disputes by the terrible decision of war, a growth of the mutual respect which is the parent of liberty—for the mutual respect of each for each means the common liberty of all.

The growth of this is a growth of Christian influence, and of the Christian temper: it is a victory of "our faith," for it is the victory of Christian love.

2. In the intellectual life Christianity is the spirit of truth. Nothing that is true is alien to it. Hypocrisy, falsehood, insincerity, are its extreme opposites. It is the spirit which not merely acquiesces in what is true, but finds it out. It is the spirit of investigation. It

wages a constant war against ignorance and prejudice, and unproved assertion—against the tenacious clinging to the old as old, the unreasoning dislike to the new as new. And in this war it is succeeding. There is a lessening tendency to acquiesce in what is false, a growing tendency to find out what is true. Men are beginning to regard facts rather than opinions, the things that are rather than the things that are imagined. New tracks are being opened up, and every step of the old tracks is being re-surveyed. This spirit of investigation is the spirit of Christianity. There are, no doubt, unbelievers in the manifoldness of the works and ways of God, who take every discovery as a fresh rebuff, who would put chains upon the feet of every traveller into the domain of science or of history, lest his report of what is to be found there should be different from their own or other men's dreams. But the number of such timorous doubters is lessening: the number of believers in truth is increasing.

It may be that the particular opinions which we prize will not be the doctrines that will prevail. It may be that what is born of God excludes much that we hold sacred, and includes much that we think profane. It may be, that in the wreck and overthrow of the false, many things will be swept away which we would gladly keep, and many things be kept which we would gladly sweep away.

But the *truth* will overcome: and every fresh truth that is established is a fresh vindication of the spirit of Christianity, which is the spirit of truth. And is

there one among us so enamoured of himself as to prefer that the phantoms of his own brain should live, and that truth itself should die ?

But for you and me, brethren, in our own secret souls these words of to-day's Epistle have a more particular comfort and consolation. For there is not one world only, but many. The larger world of which I have been speaking has its separate and special reflection in each individual soul. To some of us the world is the vast complex of insoluble riddles which force their way into our souls, and demand an answer which we cannot give, and keep us in a perpetual unrest. To some of us the world is an accumulation of vexation upon vexation, of thwarted desires, and unsatisfied aspirations, and the cutting off of cherished hopes, and the failure to realise the ideal which we set before us. To some of us the world is the dead weight of apathy, of disinclination to exertion, of morbid feelings, of the influence of custom and fashion and popular prejudice, which retards spiritual movement and stunts spiritual growth. Every one of us has his own special world within him and about him : but every one of us, so long as there is in him the faintest whisper of conscience, the faintest aspiration after better things, has both within him and about him that which "is born of God." Between these two there is a perpetual and irrepressible conflict. It is natural for us sometimes to despair. It is natural for us sometimes even to doubt the presence, or the power, or the providence of God. For the world

must have its victories. But unless we voluntarily submit to defeat, it cannot be victorious at the last. Our faces may be bruised and bleeding, our shields battered and dinted in the fight; for we are not told that "whatsoever is born of God" will escape conflict; but we are told, and it is the crown of all consolations, that "whatsoever is born of God" shall overcome.

SERMON II.

THE STRENGTH OF CHRIST.

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[*Quebec Cathedral*, 1864.]

"My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."—EPH. vi. 10.

THE religious doubts which are so strongly marked on modern literature, and which I know, brethren, are shared by some of you, may be grouped in two classes, intellectual and moral, each of which has two degrees, according as the doubt affects religion in general or the Christian religion in particular.

1. There is, firstly, the deepest of all doubts, the doubt whether God and the soul exist, whether the visible world upon which our eyes look may not be the sum total of reality, and whether the material organism which the anatomist dissects may not comprehend in itself all that we are and can be.

2. There is, secondly, the doubt not as to religion in general but as to Christianity in particular. There are men who, believing in God and the soul, in the order of Providence and the life to come, are not convinced that Christianity stands on any other footing than natural religion. Admitting the moral government of

the world, they doubt the doctrine of God's special intervention and the consequent possibility of a revelation; admitting human imperfection, they doubt the doctrine of the Fall and the consequent necessity of the Atonement; admitting our Lord's historical reality, they doubt the miraculous element in His life and consequently His divinity.

These are the two stages of intellectual doubt: the other kind is moral, and it likewise has two degrees.

1. There are some who doubt not the facts of religion but its utility. Admitting that if religion increased the sum of human happiness it would, whether true or not, be useful, they doubt whether the world has been or is likely to be on the whole the better for it. They hold that the belief in a future life supplies a false motive for conduct, and that the result of the belief in even the moral government of God has been a terrorism which has retarded human progress.

2. There are others who doubt not the general utility of religion but the special utility of Christianity. They doubt whether it has supplied any motive to right conduct which the promptings of human nature could not of themselves have afforded, or whether it contains any valid moral precept which had not been previously stated by, or could not be legitimately inferred from, either Greek philosophy or Jewish mysticism.

I do not include in this analysis of the forms of doubt those workings of a diseased mental or moral nature which show themselves in scoffing ridicule of

truth, and seek in doubt a refuge from conscience: I speak only of the honest doubts of thoughtful men, because it is these only that we have to face. Nor do I propose this morning to give all the answers that might be given to any one of these forms of doubt. But I propose to draw your attention to the practical answer which the Epistle for to-day suggests to doubters of every degree, and particularly to those who question the special utility of the faith which we profess, and which this is the proper place to vindicate.

The Apostle bids us "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

This reminds us that in the Gospel we have at any rate a new *power*. Whether we can or cannot demonstrate metaphysically the antecedent possibility of miracles, whether we can or cannot prove historically the fact of the resurrection, whether it be true or not that Christianity contains no new moral precept, this one fact remains—incontrovertible, and on any other hypothesis inexplicable,—that Christianity has been and is a moral power, that it has changed and is changing the moral tone of the human race, and that, in spite of the apathy and inconsistency of many of those who bear the Christian name, it gives a new motive to the doing of our duty, and supplies the lacking energy to our weak and struggling souls.

In answer to intellectual doubt I would say, Analyse as you will the historical facts connected with the life of Christ and the first propagation of the Gospel; reduce them, if you will, to so much fact and so much

fiction, so much objective reality and so much subjective impression; still there remains, above and beyond all this, the fact that Christianity has succeeded where philosophy failed, that it has done the very thing which no other creed ever could do,—that it has given a new impetus to moral progress, a new life to every believing soul.

In answer to moral doubt I would say, Dissect as you will the ethical system of the New Testament; refer, if you will, this precept to the Alexandrian school and that to the Rabbis; show the analogy, if you will, between this or that truth of Christianity and this or that truth of Stoicism; still you must allow that there is in the Christian faith the missing link of the chain which binds man to duty, that it gives a power not only to the few but to the many, where all other systems had at their utmost height only strengthened the moral resolutions of individual philosophers.

This is the fact to be accounted for. The most searching analysis only proves that, whereas God taught men in many ways what they ought to do, it was the special mission of His Blessed Son to give them the power to do it.

But let us not think of this as a mere general proposition: the exhortation of the Apostle is a personal one, and as such we should take it to ourselves. For strength is the common want of every one of us: we want not the knowledge of our duty but the power to do it. We all know more or less the bitter struggle

between impulse and conviction; we have all been tempted—we are tempted every day—to give up what we know to be right for what we feel to be pleasant; we struggle, some of us, to resist, and we find our struggles in vain; we set out in the morning with the full intention to do what is right, and we find before the day is half over that we have preferred the interest of the moment to known and undoubted duty; we would fain fear God and keep His commandments, but we find it so hard as to be virtually impossible to disentangle ourselves from the intricate ties which bind us to common modes of action, or to resist the accumulating influences which lead us to accept current maxims of morality. But the remedy lies within our reach. The Apostle, writing as one who had felt all this as strongly as we can feel it, bids us "be strong in the Lord." It would have been a mockery to have said simply, "Be strong." It is the expression of the deepest thought and the most varied experience to say, "Be strong *in the Lord.*" The strength by which we are to live must be not ours but Christ's: it will come to us not from the human nature which we inherit at our birth, but from the Divine nature which His Spirit breathes upon us.

And what do I mean by strength? I mean the power to do right when we know it: to give up what will be of most immediate advantage for the sake of the inner voice which speaks to us of duty; to avoid tampering with evil suggestions; to be able to resist the ever-recurring tendency of the old Adam to angry,

selfish, cowardly, indolent, uncharitable actions. It is to do all this in the faith and by the promised power of Him who lived and died and is present with us still —perfect God and perfect man—the highest type of human excellence and the highest source of moral power.

Nor let us think merely of strength on the grand scale for some great act of moral heroism. That which we want, and that which our Master gives us, is strength for our common life—strength to do our ordinary duties—strength not only for the pitched battles which some of us have, now and again, to fight, but strength also, and most especially, for the daily conflicts with evil, the skirmishes, so to speak, between the advanced outposts of evil and good, where they meet so closely as to seem not so much enemies as friends. It is the strength of a new motive; it is given to us by One who is not only a perfect Example, but an ever-present Guide. For He who in those far-off ages trod the Judæan hills is with us still. He is with us not only as a memory of the past, but as a living influence. He who helped men in their common life long ago helps us still. The mere memory of Him would have done much for us. The bare record of His life, the story of His unflinching devotion to duty, of His boundless charity, of His unsullied purity, would of itself have suggested high and new motives. The fact that the idea of humanity had once been realized would of itself have been an encouragement and a support to us in our efforts to do better. But

the strength which we may have is something far higher. It is the strength of One who is ever present by His Spirit—who being very God is not far from every one of us, who being very Man can penetrate the deep recesses of our hearts and know at once their aspirations and their needs. It is the strength not of an imaginary picture of perfection, but of a Divine Redeemer. It is a strength which, if once we make it our own, will grow with our growth, be sufficient for every need of life, and be a rod which will turn into dry land for us the dark river of death.

If any one of you, brethren, has been hitherto tempted to throw the blame of his wrong-doings and shortcomings upon his weakness, let him remember that the fault is his own: the weakest among us may become strong if only he will put on the promised armour of God. And if any one of you has been hitherto a sceptic as to the moral power of the Gospel to overcome his individual difficulties and to support him in his peculiar dangers, let him remember that this simple exhortation contains all that he can need—that for every difficulty and every doubt, every suggestion of a selfish heart, every prompting of evil passion, every hesitation about duty, every tampering with sin, there is one remedy, and that Divine,—he may, if he will, be strong "*in the Lord and in the power of His might.*"

SERMON III.

THE RISEN SAVIOUR.

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[*Quebec Cathedral, Easter Day*, 1865.]

"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."—ST. LUKE xxiv. 5, 6

THE Sabbath of the great Festival was over: the solemnities of the Temple had not abated their magnificence: the paschal lamb had been slain and eaten in ten thousand Jewish homes: the gathered multitudes from every country under heaven had shared in the festivity as they had done in years gone by, and as they hoped to do in years to come. The day before three men had been crucified. It was no uncommon incident. Two of them were notorious bandits, the third a Teacher, who had claimed a special mission from heaven, but who had at last been condemned by the Sanhedrim for blasphemy, and executed by the Roman governor on a vague charge of treason. His followers, of whom but few had survived His apparent fall, were mourning over His death. They had "trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel,"—that the power which had recalled the dead to life, and sent the unclean spirits back to their abyss, would have

brought legions of angels with swords of flame to drive away the Roman eagles from the chosen land. But the grave which had closed over Abraham and David and the Prophets had received Jesus of Nazareth. The hopes of Israel were buried with Him in the tomb. Nothing now was left but to remember His precious words, and to pay to what remained of Him the last sad tribute of affection.

"Very early in the morning," while the darkness still lingered in the ravines around, and the top of Olivet alone reflected the rising of the Easter sun, came the women who had followed Him from Galilee to embalm the Sacred Body, which the tender care of Joseph had wrapped in the winding-sheet and laid in the new-made tomb. But they "knew not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." They had come to seek what was far away. "And as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments, and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

"Which things are"—not a fact only but—"an allegory." Not in that grey dawn alone, but through all the many days and years of Christian history, has the same story been repeated. Crowd after crowd of theologians and saints and common men has followed the Marys to the sepulchre. The history of the Church has been in no small degree the history of a search for a dead rather than a living Christ. Men have bowed

their heads and looked into the tomb, when they should have lifted up their eyes to heaven, and seen the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Some have sought Him in the tomb where the facts of history lie like dead men's bones, unbreathed upon and unrevived ; they can tell with more or less accuracy of detail what He did and said and suffered, but the Name which once healed the sick and raised the dead—that tender humanity, which is still touched with sympathy for our weakness, that awful majesty, in whose hands are still held the keys of hell and death—is to them a name and nothing more. Others have sought an ideal Christ, the creation of poets and painters, enshrined in harmonies of perfect colouring, or imagery of splendid words—a shrine beautiful indeed, but still a tomb,—in which that gathering together of all that it is possible to conceive of tenderness, and sorrow, and patient suffering, is not incarnate, but crystallized, with no present living power. Others have sought Him in the labyrinth of philosophy : they have wrapped Him anew in the grave-clothes of doctrines and formularies : they have made Him the pivot round which metaphysical theories of sin and punishment have revolved : but they have failed to realize the awful presence, though unseen, among us, of the risen Master of our souls.

Brethren, on this Easter morning, as the light breaks once more over that empty tomb, we preach to you not a dead but a living Saviour, not a name which represents only a bygone historical personage, not an ideal Man of Sorrows devised by monks in their

cloisters, or dreamed of by poets in their reveries, but One who lives still, passing to and fro among human life, as once He passed visibly through the streets of Jerusalem, never weary now, never homeless now, but ever strong to help our feebleness, and to rescue us from the curse of sin.

For it is not only that He lives: He lives as a *Man*. His manhood is as perfect now as it was long ago in Palestine. There have been men, it is true, in all periods of the Church's history who have derogated from that perfect humanity. Some have held that His human body was united to a Divine soul; others have held that, though there was a human reason, there were not human feelings or a human will. But against every form of this opinion the Church of every age has protested. The last and most metaphysical of the creeds is in this respect the most explicit, and the most human. He not only *was* but *is* "perfect Man," as well as "perfect God." When He rose from the dead He did not leave His humanity in the grave. He rose a Conqueror, but still a Man—a High Priest strong to succour, because He is touched with pity.

And as such, think of Him: think of the tenderness which was moved to tears by His friend's sorrow; think of the courage which could brave opposition and rejection and death itself in the consciousness of duty; think of the faith against which the Tempter drew in vain the keenest shafts from his long-practised bow; think of the resolute will which could find its meat and drink in doing the appointed task; think of the patient

forbearance which the bitterest hostility could not rouse into anger; think of the self-control which could hold the consciousness of a Divine mission in check for thirty years—until His "hour" was come. Think of all this as endowed now with power to help as well as to sympathize; think of it as not far off, but very near—near enough to hear the murmur of an unuttered prayer—near enough to trace the subtlest windings of temptation through the labyrinth of the soul—telling our weak spirits, as they bow beneath the burden of their weakness, and look upward for help in their struggles to be holier—"I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."

Is not this what we want? Is not this strong arm of a Helper, who is at once human and Divine, the satisfaction of our deepest needs? For what is it that we are seeking all through life? Is it not to be better men? Is it not that our sins and sinfulness may be forgiven, and a holier life made possible? Is it not that we may do our work with a better heart and a stronger will? Is it not that we may throw off the old cravings after selfish and earthly ends, and make each passing incident a means of moral growth? And what is it that we look for when this life is ended? Is it that we may sleep a sleep from which there will be no waking? Is it that these faculties which here we are cultivating and strengthening may cease to have an exercise? Is it that we are tired of being, and would fain sink back again into the nothingness from which we came? Nay, it is not so. We want

not death but life—not the mechanical life of a brute organism, but the ever-aspiring, ever-developing life of a man. And what we want that first Easter morning has made possible. In Him who rose all fulness dwells, and by communion with Him, by sharing His spirit and following in His steps, we may be partakers of His holiness.

Let this, then, be your Easter lesson. Seek no longer the living among the dead, but realize the risen Saviour as an ever-present power, one who not only gives you help in solemn moments of lonely struggle, but whose manhood takes Him now, as it took Him long ago, wherever men are to be found and wherever human hearts are sighing for strength and sympathy. Let your struggle be from this day forward to make your communion with Him constant as well as deep. Rise with Him from the death of sin—from the tomb in which your best instincts are buried, while your lower impulses keep up the masquerade of life. Fix one by one upon those points of His character in which the majority of us are most unlike Him, and strive, by the help which He gives, to become, from day to day, more pure, more brave, more resolute in duty, more ready to meet minor trials, more tender-hearted towards those who fail, more charitable towards those who differ from you. Mortify one by one "your members which are upon the earth"—uncleanness, untruthfulness, covetousness, anger, malice. Struggle, whatever the struggle cost, to wean your affections from these shadows that pass—earthly riches, earthly honours,

earthly position, and set them on "things above"—things that abide.

And thus seeking you will find;—you will find your characters growing day by day, through the strength which He gives, more like the pattern which He left; you will find the chains of sin which now bind you down one by one snapping asunder, and that you are rising to the full height of your true selves—not casting aside your manhood, but evolving its perfect form. Nor will the finding cease when this life is ended. He in whose communion you live will not forsake you when you die. The Resurrection is at once the type and the cause of an endless progress. All life is a resurrection—a passing from the old into the new. And life in Christ is an eternal resurrection, an eternal ascent to God. In the very heaven of heavens there will still be new depths of love to be sounded, new heights of knowledge to be scaled. But let the sphere of our souls' being widen as it may, it will still be the power of Him who, through His resurrection, became a quickening spirit, that shall shape them to new forms of holiness and glory, until the last shadow of our darkness fades into His light, and the last struggling aspiration floats up into His perfect peace.

SERMON IV.

THE HEAVENLY AND THE EARTHLY CONFLICT.

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[*St. Mary's, Oxford, Michaelmas Day*, 1867.]

"There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven."—Rev. xii. 7, 8.

UNDER the form of a combat between St. Michael and the dragon the Church brings before us to-day the wider bearings of that struggle which has gone on through all recorded history, and which is going on still in our own souls, between the powers of evil and the powers of good.

The subject is one which affords a wide scope to the imagination. It is one which has given birth to great paintings and to still greater poems; but it is one also, and as such I propose to deal with it now, which has a direct relation to our every-day difficulties and to the most prosaic forms of life.

Two points seem to be especially impressed upon us by the form in which it comes before us to-day.

1. In the first place it seems to be indicated that we are members of a larger community than that which is

apparent to our senses. Our senses tell us of a world beneath us and around us. They tell us of the brute creation with which we are linked by the strong tie of a common, or almost common, organism, of common wants and common desires, of a common birth and a common death. They tell us also of the world of our fellow-men, of the action and reaction of men upon one another, of wealth and poverty, of success and failure, of comfort and distress. Nor do they ever cease their story. What they tell us is constantly present, and assumes for us an absorbing interest. They are so near, so urgent, so importunate, that their din is ever in our ears. We not only listen to them, but are carried away by them. We tend to live for them and for what they suggest to us. We fill our little space in the society of our fellows. We have our friends and relatives, those above us whose acquaintance we covet, those below us in whose concerns we take a kindly interest. If we talk, it is for the most part about this and that person to whom this or that has happened. If we act, it is for the most part that we may satisfy our bodily desires or our social ambitions. The morning occupations of our business or our households, the evening cares of entertainment or of rest, absorb almost all our energies, and sum up almost all our purposes; and the parenthesis of religion which we insert into our routine becomes only an expression of social interest in a hardly less personal form.

And all the while you and I are members of a community which begins with men and ends with

God; a community which gathers into itself all intelligent souls, all spirits whom God has made, all who at whatever distance can approach Him in adoration or in prayer. You and I, busy as we are with our occupations, our human interests, our sympathies more or less wide with politics and society, blind as we are to the Eternity in which even now we move, are one in life and one in hope with sons and servants and ministers of God, whose number cannot be counted for multitude. Where they are and what they are, whether they be in our midst as we sit here, or whether they tenant yonder far-off stars; whether their shape be what Hebrew poets imagined and Italian painters painted, or whether it be some new and to us unknown clothing of the spirit, are questions about which we may dream, but to which we can give no answer. It is sufficient for us to know that between us and God is not the deep void of an appalling nothingness, but beings who, like us, are conscious of His presence: and some at least of whom if, unlike us, they need not pray, can at least, like us, bow down their faces and adore.

2. In the second place, the text implies not only that we are members of a larger community than that which is apparent to the senses, but also that in that larger community there is the same great conflict going on which is for ever raging here—the conflict for mastery between evil and good. This present world of human souls is not the only scene of strife. Far back in the remote and incalculable past we read of angels who

"kept not their first estate;" and far on in the perhaps still distant future we read of "war in heaven." Stretched between the two is human history, and all the acted problems of which history is the sum. Read that long chronicle of struggles and defeats and victories, of disappointed ambitions and successful sins, of fierce contests between justice and injustice, between right and might, between truth and error. Look upon your own lives, and think of all their chequered incidents, of temptations and failures, of sins which sting you still as you think of them, of blighted hopes and unforeseen successes and sudden reverses, of joys and sorrows, great and small, rising and falling in a ceaseless alternation, as the waves of the sea rise up moment by moment into the light, and moment by moment sink back again into the darkness. And as you think of all this, remember that it is but the visible part of a conflict in which all intelligent creatures of God are taking part, and that there may be moments at which, if we had but eyes to see, we should behold other struggles and other victories, at which, like the only One of our race who knew the secrets of the invisible, we might even see "Satan fall from heaven."

I am calling your attention to this to-day, not to supply a barren food for the imagination, but that the thought of it may have a direct effect upon our daily lives.

It is not given to us to fight the great battle which St. Michael is represented as fighting with the dragon "who deceiveth the whole world;" but it is given to

us to fight a battle apparently smaller, but in fact as great, which involves the same principles, and which is ony another form of the same universal struggle.

What is it, for example, to tell a lie? It seems but a little thing: the yielding to a sudden impulse—the movement of a muscle or two—a faint vibration of the air—and the lie is told. We forget it, and all seems over. And what is it to tell the truth instead of a lie? Only a momentary resolution—the perhaps reluctant passing of a sentence in the judgment-hall of the conscience—a breath, and nothing more.

And yet on these two courses depend issues which stretch out into illimitable space and into endless time. As the balance of motives sways to truth or to falsehood the soul ranges itself in one of two great armies: it is one more victory or one more defeat for the cause of goodness and of God: it is one more stone added to the fabric of eternal truth, or one more blow which wants not will but strength to shake it to its deep foundations.

It is in these daily actions, which seem so trivial, which we perform so thoughtlessly, which we look back upon with such an indifferent regard, that the deepest and holiest of all principles are involved. As we do what is just or not just, as we say what is true or not true, we are giving or withholding the assent of a perhaps free will to an eternal principle. The lie which we tell in our business, the trick by which we take advantage of another's ignorance, the slander which we complacently repeat from half-sympathising

lips, the indolent neglect of a duty which stares us in the face, are acts which do not end here; they not only leave a lasting mark upon our character, but touch upon an infinite sphere and widen out like the widening of a ripple upon a shoreless sea. Here and now, as truly as when "Satan fell from heaven;" here and now, as truly as in the great crises of human history, is being fought out, not in metaphor but in stern earnest, that fight between good and evil, between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, of which all that we know of the history of intelligent souls is but the varied expression. And yet I must recall you to the consideration that the actions in which all this is involved are but the common ordinary actions of your every-day life. The battlefield is not some vast interstellar space in which all the gathered spiritual hosts are massed in dense array, but the prosaic ground of our studies, and our shops, and our dining-rooms. The battle is not waged so much at some supreme moments of mental struggle, when all the forces of our nature come into conscious play, but in the subtler form of the setting aside of plausible motives, and the struggling with apparently trivial sins. The two greatest of all recorded temptations turned upon actions which might at the moment have seemed insignificant: "Eat this apple," said the serpent, "it is pleasant to the taste: it will do you no harm." "Turn these stones into loaves," said the devil; "you are very hungry, and you have but to say the word." And yet upon these insignificant actions, upon the doing of the one and the not doing of the

other, what awful issues hung! And to you and me, it may be to others besides you and me, the temptation comes in no less subtle a form. "Do this—it is very pleasant, and will do no real harm." "Do this—it is almost necessary, and the little wrong of it can soon be undone." Sometimes we listen and sometimes we refuse: and all our lives long, day by day and hour by hour, we alternate between victory and defeat, in a struggle which sometimes becomes a despair. For the path of holiness is not the calm ascent of a marble stairway: it is for all of us, for some no doubt more than for others, a life-long journey over a rugged and sometimes uncertain road, a stumbling over many stones, a wandering into many a by-path, a fall into many a snare: and when heaven's gates open to us at last, they open to a tattered traveller with a worn and weary soul.

But, for all that, there need be no despair. In the great allegory of the text there is at once the picture and the assurance of victory. "The dragon prevailed not, neither was his place found any more in heaven." The victory ~~is~~ maybe slow to come, but it comes at last; and its coming, for this world at least, depends, in God's providence, not on angels and archangels, but upon you and me and men like ourselves. It depends on our doing the best we individually can, with the help which is given to us from above, to crush in our own souls, and in the sphere in which we move, the daily and hourly temptations to selfishness, to injustice, to untruth, to uncharitableness, to indolence, and to irritability.

Every dishonest act which we decline to perform, every falsehood which we refuse to utter, every uncharitable word which we leave unsaid, every sensual impulse which we crush, is for ourselves, for the world of men, for the world of spirits of which we are members, one more thwarting of the power of evil, one more victory of the power of good, one more step towards that consummation when the great choir of intelligent souls shall circle round the Father of spirits from whom both they and we derive our life, and to whom both we and they alike return.

SERMON V.

THE GOSPEL OF THE POOR.

SERMON V.

THE GOSPEL OF THE POOR.

[*University of Oxford*, 1869.]

"Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto Him, Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."—St. Matthew xi. 2-5.

AT the time these words were spoken the orbit of the Jewish, and perhaps also of the European, mind was traversed by one of those semi-luminous belts of more or less undefined anticipations out of which great thoughts and great deeds periodically spring. The belief in a *règime* had passed into the belief in a man. Year by year the belief had gathered form. Hope had mingled with the sense of want, and become an anxious waiting. At last a voice was heard on the slopes of the Galilean hills which seemed like the voice of the Expected One. It was the voice of One who had come to satisfy, not the imagined need of a King, but the unexpressed need of a Comforter. He began not with the doing of some great work or

the utterance of some profound thought, but with the proclamation of a Jubilee. In that lay the sign of His Messiahship. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, *because* He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor." And when the question was directly asked —the only question of the kind which the Synoptic Gospels record—"Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" He pointed, both for answer and for proof, to nothing else than what He had at first proclaimed; not to the width or depth of what He taught, but to its compassion, its sympathy, its charity—"the blind receive their sight . . . and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

I think it not unfitting to call your attention to the profound insight which these words of last Sunday's gospel give into the work which the Christian faith has done, and has to do, in human society. It has been, and it is, the Gospel of the troubled and the poor.

I will speak first of the past, and secondly of the present.

I. At the time when it appeared, as at almost all times in civilized communities, three distinct religions, or groups of religions, divided the Roman empire—the religion of the comfortable classes, the religion of the reflecting classes, and the religion of the proletariat.

The religion of the comfortable classes was, then as now, a worship of luxury, tempered by a belief in the marvellous and the fear of death. The religion of

the reflecting classes was chiefly a literary philosophy coloured, on its theological side, by a "rationalized" polytheism. The religion of the proletariat was, for the most part, an aggregate of superstitions scarcely one stage above fetichism.

Upon these three religions, or groups of religions, two new influences were beginning to work—the influence of thaumaturgy and the influence of revived Stoicism. I shall not now speak of the former of these influences, but it will be strictly relevant to the subject in hand to examine at least the more prominent features of the latter, and to show what there was in it which made it fail in the same field in which Christianity succeeded.

Between it and Christianity are many points of resemblance. It is the most Christian of non-Christian religions. It, like Christianity, believes in an ever-present God and Father of all, who watches every movement, and listens to every prayer. It, like Christianity, calls men the sons of God, and would have them make it the rule of their life to follow Him. It, like Christianity, would have men be true, and pure, and faithful, and considerate, and self-respectful, and compassionate. And incidental expressions of Stoic writers have so much the ring of the New Testament about them, that uncritical minds have at various times discussed the question whether Seneca may not have heard St. Paul, or Epictetus have been a Christian. But between the two systems are deep chasms of difference. It is impossible either to subtract the

Personality of Christ from Christianity, and call the residuum Stoicism, or to add It to Stoicism and call the result Christianity. It is impossible for Stoicism to exist with, or for Christianity to exist without, the idea of *sin*. Christianity postulates a broken harmony which it is beyond the unaided power of man to restore: Stoicism postulates a perfect order which it is the aim and business of the philosopher to preserve. Christianity is built upon the common emotions, Stoicism upon the common reason of mankind. The one appeals to the heart, the other to the intellect; the one to the unreflecting many, the other to the unimpassioned few. Stoicism, in short, is a strong man's analysis of his strength. It is the attempt to eliminate the factor of passion from the complex of human motives. "Pain is no evil, pleasure is no good": and, as almost all the pains and pleasures of life are pains and pleasures of the imagination—anticipated evils or remembered joys —the right discipline of the imagination may reduce them to a minimum, and enable a man to live his life in peace, in harmony with natural law. At the same time, we must guard against crediting Stoicism with what, by an abuse of its own word, is now called "apathy." It was far from shutting a man out from the love of wife and child, of country and of home. It had not only sympathy for other men, but enthusiasm. It could not help but preach to convert them. The perfect Stoic was not so much a disciple as an apostle.

And for several centuries this revived Stoicism had

a more vigorous life in the rhetorical schools—the infant Universities of Europe—than is at first sight apparent. The majority of the non-Christian writings of that period have perished in the "struggle for life" with the writings of the Christian fathers; but side by side with the literature with which most of us are to some extent familiar was another literature, now almost wholly gone, which shows how deep the minds of the reflecting classes were filled with the spirit of Stoicism.

And yet it failed—even with these reflecting classes. It failed because it lost its power as a rule of conduct, and became a literature. It failed because its preachers ceased to preach, but only wrangled or declaimed. It failed because it was no longer itself the life and the reward of those who felt its power, but became an endowed profession. It failed because its joints stiffened, and its blood chilled, and it no longer spoke with a living tongue the thoughts of a living brain, but repeated its supposed dogmatic verities with the mechanical accuracy of an automaton.

And with the proletariat it had never succeeded. It had not the first conditions of success. It appealed not to the emotions but to the intellect; and to the mass of men the emotions rather than the intellect are the springs of moral action. It had not one of the elements of a popular religion. It aimed not, as a popular religion must aim, at something superhuman, but only at the preservation of a balance of power between the various elements of human nature. In the

crouching misery of the lower classes of the Roman Empire something less rational was needed. It helped men to be at peace; but what peace was there for the slave or the pauper? It helped them to be free from emotion; but what freedom from emotion could there be when hunger was gnawing the flesh from men's bones? It had no moral lever. It had neither an ideal, nor a terror, nor a hope. It had no ideal—for Zeus was too far off, Socrates and Diogenes too near. It had no terror—for it recognised no punishment for vice except that which is inherent in being vicious. It had no hope—for it had no life to come. A strong man might live without any of these: but the mass of men required all three. As far as the wretched and the lonely were concerned, Stoicism did but show them how to live an unliveable life, and to attain an unattainable end.

But it was otherwise with Christianity. It was from the first the Gospel of the poor. It laid but little stress on intellectual power:—"Not many wise men after the flesh . . . are called." It grew but slowly among the reflecting classes. Not until the end of the fourth century did the rhetoricians, who had hitherto professed Stoicism, come in any great numbers to profess Christianity. But, in the meantime, the great masses of the Empire had been won. They had been won, not by the thaumaturgic element in early Christianity, not by its denunciation of their vices, not by the contagion of its martyrdoms, but rather by its satisfaction of their great needs.

For look at the Empire : through its vast length and breadth it was pauperized and decaying. In Rome itself, and in one or two of the larger provincial cities, was no doubt an accumulation of capital, but it was in comparatively few hands. In Italy and the majority of the provinces all were paupers together. The proofs of it abound. The economical conditions of the production of wealth did not exist : the economical results of the absence of wealth were everywhere apparent. Even so early in the history of the Empire as the time of Plutarch, the whole of Greece could only furnish a contingent of 3,000 men. The system of deletion and confiscation had broken up the large estates without encouraging small proprietors. There were vast districts once teeming with inhabitants, which had neither owners nor slaves. The land was impoverished; the crops failed; the population decreased. The thinned yeomanry of Italy could not find bread to feed their children; eleemosynary aids began to be necessary; and some of the Emperors, conspicuously Trajan, made the granting of subventions for the aliment of children an important part of their domestic administration. Famines, wars, the uncertainty of property, thinned the empire more and more, until, when Diocletian replaced the purple toga by the flowing robe of an eastern sovereign, the flowing robe was almost necessary to hide from its own view the bloodless limbs and the protruding bones of the once vigorous Roman state.

And where there is pauperism there is wretchedness;

and where there is wretchedness there is a craving for sympathy—or despair.

Such was the field in which Christianity struck root. Into the rugged ground of wretched hearts it sent the deep-reaching fibres of love and hope. It gave men an ideal, for each succeeding century threw an intenser light upon the image of the Perfect Man, who was also Perfect God. It gave them a hope: for its doctrine of the immortality of the soul at once interpreted and formulated the still wider doctrine—which is for all but the most wise or the most comfortable a moral necessity—that there are, sooner or later, compensations in the life of the individual and in the history of the race. And, above all, it had an organization: there was the contagion of brotherhood about it. Stoicism had encouraged—perhaps invented—philanthropy, but it knew nothing of brotherly love. In the stronger feeling of a common work for a common Lord, the distinctions of classes began to break down. Rich and poor had a common faith, and met together for common worship. In the eyes of the Church there was neither bond nor free. And thus there grew up, not by antagonism to society, but by intense sympathy with it, a vast complex unity which, rising upwards from beneath, absorbed the reflecting classes one by one, and threw at length the seeming guise of at least a new form and an unwonted impulse over the most impenetrable and immutable of all reliigons —the religion of the unthinking well-to-do and respectable.

II. This was what Christianity did once: this is what it has the power to do again.

And there is still the same need for its being done.

The moral conditions of modern society are singularly akin to the moral conditions of the society of the Empire. There is among us, as there was in the vast tracts of the Empire—only huddled together with still more haggard faces and in still more filthy rags—a seething mass of poverty which boils over perpetually into crime. Now, as then, the miserable are in excess of the happy. It would seem as though civilization exuded misery. Every year that comes brings with it new complications of pauperism, and adds to the number of the struggling and the sad.

And while it is so, the work of Christianity, so far from being, as we sometimes hear, almost ended, is hardly yet begun.

For it is the religion of the sad. It appeals to what has almost become a permanent factor of human nature. It appeals to the sense of wretchedness, to the consciousness of unachieved purposes, to the bitterness of unmerited failure and disappointed dreams. It must last at least as long as sadness lasts—as long as struggle is the law of life and effort is outrun by aspiration.

But why should I say all this to you who know it well?

1. Because, in the first place, this great and special function of Christianity—this to which the Master of us all pointed when the question was raised who He

was and what He came to do—is so continually overlooked and forgotten in the strife of tongues, in the effort to make Christianity what it never professed to be, an elaborate system of philosophy.

2. And because, in the second place, there is a growing tendency among many of the reflecting class in our own society to break down with rude hands the image which Christianity has set up. "They know not what they do." It may be comparatively easy for us, as we sit or teach in our quiet rooms, to preach and practise a calm philosophy in which hope and fear are replaced by the conviction that all is cause and effect and natural law—though even to us there is at times a Nemesis of Faith. But go into the streets of a great city, and watch the haggard forms of the passers-by, and tell them that their misery and hopeless struggles are but the result of social laws which it may take ages to remedy; or go into some wretched hovel, and tell the little ones, as they crouch in their hunger and loneliness round their dead father's corpse, that pain is no evil, and self-perfection the end of life;—and the gaunt weird faces will look up at you with a quiet beseeching which is more eloquent than any speech, and—if they believe you—will but echo back your own Stoic's words, "The door is open—let us die." But go to them with the news that there is a Father of the fatherless, a Comforter of the sad, a better life hereafter, and there will be a new motive for exertion, a new light in life.

For their sakes, if not for our own, let us hesitate

before—either by the emasculation of its doctrines or the discrediting of its credentials—we attempt to cripple Christianity as a moral power: let us hesitate before we condemn the oppressed and the lonely and the sad of generations yet to come, to sit round the flickering embers of a dying faith, drinking cups of unmingled gall.

SERMON VI.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

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[*St. Chad's, Headingley*, 1873.]

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—GAL. v. 17.

WE are all conscious of it: the struggle began in us at our birth, and will only end with death.

And yet I can understand some of you thinking that there is a certain exaggeration in these words of the Apostle. For the Spirit and the flesh are not always coming, so to speak, visibly upon the scene and fighting a pitched battle for the mastery; we are not at every moment conscious of the tug and strain of spiritual contention: on the contrary, so silent is the shock of these mighty unseen forces, that often in the very crisis of the battle we are saying to ourselves that all is still.

But whether we be conscious of it or no, the conflict is going on. Every motive that urges us is a movement of either the one force or the other; every action that we perform is a conquest of the flesh over the Spirit or of the Spirit over the flesh.

For these two elements are permanent in our nature. On the one hand is the body, the animal part of us, that which we share in common with the brutes, and which, like them, is born and grows, and becomes old and dies; on the other hand is the soul, the divine part of us, that by which we are linked to God, and which, like God Himself, is incorruptible and immortal.

And in every action that we perform this double nature of ours necessarily comes into play. There is, consciously or unconsciously, a clash and collision between them. It is impossible for us to escape from it. We may shut ourselves up in a cloister, or retire like hermits to the wilderness; we may lead the quietest or the busiest of lives; we may have the coldest or the most sensitive of temperaments, but we take the flesh with us wherever we go, and wherever the flesh is present the Spirit is present also to combat it.

The combat takes infinitely various forms.

Sometimes, for example, the flesh assumes the form of a vehement desire to satisfy an inordinate appetite; and the Spirit is the effort to be temperate. Sometimes the flesh comes in the form of a quick resentment, the sudden reaction of the emotions which impel us to anger; and the Spirit is the effort to be calm. Sometimes the flesh is in the form of a tendency to indolence; and the Spirit is the prompting to activity. Sometimes the flesh is the inclination to stand aloof from duty because of its troublesomeness; and the Spirit is the conscience which utters its unresting command, "Do it, do it, do it." Sometimes the Spirit is

the gentle monitor who whispers in our ears, "Say what you were thinking of: it is kind—it is manly—it is Christian;" and the flesh is the other voice that says, "It will be more comfortable to leave things alone."

It is this very perpetuity of the combat, and this infinite variety of its forms, that in a large proportion of cases makes us insensible to its issues and its importance. We are conscious of a play of diverse motives; we yield to the stronger impulse or to the more persuasive argument without any sense—or at least any *vivid* sense—of victory or defeat.

This is the common rule—the law of most of our lives. But it is not so always. There are occasions on which we rise to a sense of the struggle and its issues. Our whole nature comes into play. We become conscious that the promptings to duty are the promptings of our better selves, of our diviner element; and that the promptings to take pleasure instead of duty are the promptings of the law of sin that is in our members. We feel racked and torn by the fierce vehemence of the struggle. We long to be better, purer, more generous-hearted men; and in the very effort to rise we fall—we do some deed of anger, or feel some thought of pride, or say some word of ungenerous bitterness. And when we have done it, the Spirit comes back again to us in the shape of remorse. We loathe our own selves. We strain every nerve of our better nature to shake off the heavy grasp of worldly, fleshly, animal desires; and still that heavy

grasp relaxes not its hold. Again and again we know that we are doing what we do not want to do, and leaving undone that which we would do. "I will not be angry," we say, and still we are angry; "I will not indulge my appetite," and still we do indulge it; "I will not be idle to-day," and still we are idle. And then the Spirit comes back to us in the shape of a sense of defeat; and we are ready to cry out in our agony, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

And sometimes the conflict ranges over a still wider field. It brings into play not only our whole nature, but our whole history. It was this form which was exceptionally prominent when the Gospel was first preached, and which finds an especial example in St. Paul's own history. There was a sudden halt and a sudden change. There was a turning round of the whole nature, a "conversion," as it was called, in which the struggle was of the keenest. It is so with some of us still. There are some of us who, up to a certain point in life, have trodden our path with heedless feet, taking things as they came, yielding always to the impulse which promised the keenest or the longest pleasure, without much reflection as to its being good or bad. And suddenly the Spirit within us has awaked from sleep, and made us halt on our course, and turned us round to face the mournful company of accumulated negligences and misdoings which come trooping after us from years far off and near. Each individual misdeed takes shape before our eyes, and

tells the story of its consequences, and points to our nature as we find it now, and says, "It was because you did me and me and me that you are what you are now—selfish, irritable, indolent, uncontrolled, with Desire your only guide, and Comfort your only God.

And when we feel all this—when we look back upon the chequered panorama of our lives; so many struggles, so few successes; a character so battered and dinted —we are tempted almost to despair of final victory, and to cry out in the bitter consciousness of our scanty progress, "Would God the conflict were at an end." We would fain be rid of disquiet and anxiety and unrest; we would fain have no struggles, or at least fewer; we would fain be rid of this ever-recurring responsibility of having to decide between good and evil.

"If only we were not thwarted," we say to ourselves; "if we could but crush once and for ever the cravings of the flesh; if things went more smoothly in our souls—we might have a fair chance of progress."

This is our ideal: the ideal of a life from which struggle and storm will be far away. But it is not the ideal of St. Paul. The text is probably not quite accurately rendered in our English version. St. Paul does not say, "*So that ye cannot* do the things that ye would," as though the things that we would were desirable to be done. He does not say, the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, so that your strivings after better things are liable to fail; but, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh,

in order that ye may not do the things that ye would." In other words, this contrariety between the two parts of our nature is not merely a fact, but a divinely ordered fact. It is intended to prevent the very state of things which in our narrow-sightedness we desire and pray for. The struggle is ordered by God that we may not rest and be satisfied, but move onwards and progress.

There are, it is true, some who tell us that the world is out of joint; that its strife and struggle and want of harmony show only the presence and power of evil.

But so far from struggle being an anomaly, it is a universal law. It is the law of all that is known to us of the Divine administration, both physical and moral. It is by contrariety and struggle that all things grow—not by a perennial summer heat; not by perennial winter cold; not by an eternal day of cloudless sunshine; not by the dropping of an unceasing rain—but by the alternation and antagonism of all these is the earth clothed, spring by spring, with fresh verdure, and brings forth fruit, summer by summer, for the use of man. It is the law also of the moral world. The history of mankind has been the history of a struggle. Nation has been ranged against nation, class against class, one man's thoughts against another man's thoughts, and the result of it all has been progress. Wherever there has been strife there has been progress, and wherever there has been progress there has been strife. Political progress has come

from the strife of nations; social progress has been evolved from the strife of classes; theological progress from the strife of creeds; intellectual progress from the strife of opinions.

And it is so closer home. Look both around you and within.

At this very day the conflict is going on around us. Every generation has its great question; and on every great question there are two conflicting opinions. There are grave political controversies, grave social controversies, grave theological controversies, round us on every side. We sometimes are tempted, as we think of them, to despair of our country, and to despair of society, and to despair of the Church. We see evil dominant, and good repressed; we see discord, and misunderstanding, and hot contention. We would fain exchange all this for peace. We would have questions settled; we would have controversies ended.

But, in the first place, they never will end; and, in the second place, all analogy tells us that it would be a misfortune if they did.

And last of all, to come back to our own secret selves. So it is within. The soul lives not by quiescence, but by unrest. This struggle which we feel is a sign that we are not stagnating. It may be that we are making but tardy progress; but at any rate the Spirit has not ceased to strive. It is still possible for us to bring forth, not the fruits of the flesh, but the fruits of the Spirit; to be not selfish, uncharitable,

proud, indolent, and impure, but large-hearted, humble, generous, pure-minded, Christ-like men.

Instead, therefore, of moaning all day long a barren prayer for peace, let us pray the nobler prayer for strength to fight. Let it be our ambition not to lie down contented with ourselves and with the world as we see it, but to combat every form of fleshly and earthly desire, and to rise day by day more and more into the likeness of the Perfect Man.

There are, it may be even here, men and women who *are* satisfied—who live from day to day in quiet contentment with themselves ; who find hard names for those who are struggling to make the world socially, morally, politically, better than it is ; and to whom the fierce contest between good and evil—the perpetual oscillation of success between the lower and higher parts of us which some of us know—is an evil to be shunned.

For such men we may well despair.

But let *our* effort be not to be at rest, but to be ever moving. To us rest is paralysis. The very Prince of Peace Himself came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. In our time at least that sword will not pass away ; in our time at least this dispensation of God, this contrariety between the flesh and the Spirit, will not cease. In each of us it has its own special form. If the flesh does not fight within us in the form of impurity, it may do so in the form of pride ; if not in the form of pride, it may do so in the form of selfishness ; if not in the form of selfishness, it may in the

form of indolence; if not in the form of indolence, it may do so under the form of contentiousness or uncharitableness or greediness. Whatever be the form that the flesh takes, whatever form the Spirit takes, let us pray earnestly that strength may be given to us to fight on and not to yield; that so when this present economy of God is at an end, when at last the victory is won, and the din of this earthly battle is hushed in the stillness of the eternal calm, we may know the meaning and the power of that which is incomprehensible to us now, the "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

SERMON VII.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASCENSION.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASCENSION.

[*Merton Chapel, Oxford*, 1874.]

"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing in the right hand of God."—Acts vii. 56.

THE conception of heaven has widened with the widening of human knowledge and with the increasing fulness of the revelation of God. It was at one time no more than the conception of the court of a semi-patriarchal chieftain, whose tent in the fixed flat roof above our heads was surrounded by His soldiers and messengers, and to whom the smoke of the sacrifices visibly ascended from the altars of the world below. At another time it was the conception of a realm of light beyond the firmament, in which the Lord of the armies of the sky was seated upon His throne, "high and lifted up," and in which also an innumerable company of heavenly warriors were doing battle with a vast counter-array of the powers of darkness. At another time there was given to men a still grander vision—a vision which Tintoretto painted and of which Dante sang—the vision of another world than ours, in which, through all the happy fields of light,

angels and archangels and the spirits of the just were for ever circling in their graded companies round the embodied shape of the Father Eternal, canopied by the mystic Dove, and with the Son at His right hand. And to us in these later days has been given, if not a grander conception, a fuller knowledge—the knowledge which, though still imperfect, tells us that the sky is not a roof above our heads, that the depths of space are infinite, that the Master and Maker of all, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, dwelleth not either in one particular star, that He whom we worship is a Spirit and the Father of spirits, and that the throne and the white-robed angels and the happy paradisal fields are an impossible dream.

The pictures pass like the pageant of a gorgeous cloud-land. One by one we mark them as they go, and feel a pang of sorrow as they slowly melt away, leaving only the pure blue heaven—infinite, eternal, and serene.

What is that heaven for you and me? What is it for you and me who know, or think we know, so much that our fathers did not know, to be told of an ascended Saviour, of "the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God"? Is that, too, a dream? Nay, is it not rather one of the most abiding of truths, the type of all that is great even in this great universe, of all that is most worth living for even in the stupendous worth of life itself. For what does all our religion mean but this—that we too are striving to ascend to God? What is the outcome of all our deep emotions,

our sorrows and our joys, our growth into higher knowledge and wider charity, our acts of human beneficence and our moments of rapt devotion, but that thereby we ascend one step more in that infinite ascent, and feel one more pulsation in our souls of the life of Him who veiled His Godhead under human personality, and who in His human personality has passed from earth to heaven? For that which ascended was the Man, Christ Jesus, one whose human nature was as perfect in its humanity as yours or mine, whose human body was born and grew, felt hunger and weariness, pain and death; whose human soul felt affection and sympathy, hope and humiliation, sadness and delight. Wherever heaven may be, it is He who is in heaven now. And again and again we are told that His ascension is the type and the earnest of our own; He is "the first-born among many brethren;" He is the "forerunner who has entered within the veil;" He has gone "to prepare a place for" us.

Think for one moment of the infinite significance of the lesson.

To you and me is it given, in like manner but in lesser degree, to become what He is, to make life on earth an ascent of the stairway which leads from earth to heaven, to transform these souls of ours, with all their weaknesses and all their sins, into the likeness of the Son of God.

It seems almost a paradox and an impossibility.

The lives of most of us move in so narrow a sphere as to make it seem almost a waste of empty words to

speak of their ascent to heaven. There seems to some of us but little room and scope in the sphere of our daily duties to shadow forth a Divine likeness, the likeness of the Manhood of Him who has ascended into heaven. For day after day we grope with eyes upon the ground, our brains racked with petty cares, or filled with a still more petty contentment; day after day we bind ourselves with a still firmer cord of sordid embarrassments and mean perplexities; day after day we repeat a creed which to many of us has lost its meaning, and bring the God whom we have created for ourselves more and more within the compass of our narrow lives; and day after day we pour our miserable wants into His ear, and tell Him the story of the sins which we mention only to justify.

And yet it was out of a narrow life like ours that He rose. We think that our sphere is humble; but His was the sphere of a village carpenter. We think that our opportunities are few; but His were those of a Syrian peasant. We think that our temptations are strong; but the attacks which He withstood were those of the very Tempter himself. It was out of the commonest of common lives that He sprang. There was no halo of Divine glory round His head as He walked to and fro. He did not live within the consecrated walls over which once the sacred cloud had rested. It was from a life like yours and mine—a life of daily routine, a life of apparently trivial work, a life of weary nights and disappointed days—that He ascended into the very heaven of heavens. He did so

because He saw and recognised that to which we too often shut our eyes—the infinite possibilities of good which surround every one of us, the infinite significance of the fact that God is our Father, the divinity of unselfishness.

And far beneath Him as we are, the field which lay before Him lies also before us.

To make His ascension the type of our own, we must live the life that He lived. That life was not a life of rapturous ecstasy, but of constant work. Through all the thirty years of waiting, until the "hour" was come for the consummation of His sacrifice, it was what would sometimes be called a prosaic life. But it is in the prose of life rather than in its poetry that the work of religion lies. The ascent to God has to be achieved in the sphere of daily duty and common life. Nor is it a new thing to learn that it is so. The truth is at least as old as David. For him God was a local God; for him the House of God was a visible building; for him the ascent was the physical climbing of the Judæan hills. But for us, no less than for him —though for us with a deeper meaning than for him—is the burden of his poem true: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall dwell in His holy place?" Not the poet dreamer with his mystic song; not the weird ascetic with his mortified flesh; not the hallowed priest with his garments of glory and beauty—but "he that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully; he that walketh uprightly and worketh

righteousness and speaketh the truth from his heart; he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour."

Purity and truth, uprightness and kindliness, fair dealing and guilelessness—these in our human sphere, these with our present circumstances, these and not ecstasy, these and not poetry, are the steps by which it is possible for us to ascend to God.

And shall we not struggle to ascend? Shall Ascensiontide pass away once more without one effort to rise? Shall to-morrow find us what to-day has found us—nay, it cannot do that—shall it find us worse instead of better, baptized in just one more day's baptism of selfishness and earthliness and pettiness? or shall it find us better and not worse, better by just one breath of firmer resolve to care more for goodness and less for form, more for charity and less for pique, more for truth and less for prejudice, more for others and less for ourselves? The struggle no doubt is keen, but the ascent is possible, for "our Forerunner" has gone before.

Ascend, then, with Him: let each day as it closes see you leaving farther behind the unholy thoughts which have hovered round your soul until now, and approaching nearer to His Divine purity. Ascend with Him: let each day see you leaving farther behind the uncharitableness which interprets all motives by the standard of a narrow experience, and rising to a sense of the many-sidedness of human character, and the

manifoldness of the ways of God. Ascend with Him: let each day see you leaving farther behind the cowardice which is afraid of saying what it thinks to be true, and of doing what it believes to be right, and facing with Him, if need be, the scorn of men and the reproaches of your brethren. Ascend with Him: let each day see you living less within the straitened bounds of household cares and social ambitions and weary amusements,—nay, living less even within the shadow of solemn sorrows and spiritual distress, and rising with Him to the contemplation of the vastness of this great world, and the infinite significance of moral growth, and the awful nearness of God. Ascend with Him: and so at last pass by the path which He has made possible from all this dulness and seeming pettiness, from all this hopelessness of baffled effort, and this despair of doing good, to that life which He lives now—a life in which we shall not sleep the death-like sleep of an everlasting quiescence, but rather with fuller powers and undimmed eyes have ampler sphere to "work the works of God."

SERMON VIII.

SOWING AND REAPING.

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SOWING AND REAPING.

[*Kirkby Overblow*, 1875.]

"Verily I say unto you, they have their reward."—MATT. vi. 2.

THE life of men is a life of effort. It is the condition of all God's gifts to us that we must contribute something ourselves before they are really our own. It is so in our *outer* life: the lilies of the field "toil not, neither do they spin" for their raiment, the birds of the air "sow not, neither do they reap" for their food: but to us is given at once the need and the power—the will and the responsibility of effort. It is so also in our *inner* life: in spiritual as in temporal things, we must ask before it is given to us—we must seek before we can find, we must sow before we can reap.

And not only is our life a life of effort, but upon the *nature* of the effort depends the nature of the result. Although the sunshine and the rain come from God alike upon one field and upon another, yet it is upon the kind of seed that is sown that the nature of the crop depends. And so upon a man's *actions* depends his *character*. In the life moral, as in the life physical,

whatsoever we seek we shall find, *whatsoever* we sow we shall reap.

The law of cause and effect thus runs through the whole cycle of human life; and it is this universality of its operation which makes it so fearful to contemplate: for the wrong things, and the foolish things, and the careless things we do, as well as the strivings after right, bear their fruit. The wicked, no less than the good, reap the fruit of their doings; that which they seek they find: their actions are not lost or fruitless—(as the words of the text should be accurately rendered) *ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν*—"they have their *full* reward."

If we look for a few moments at the various kinds of lives which men lead, and the various objects which they set before themselves, we shall see how this law holds.

The object which some men have is reputation—not always in the form of a world-wide fame which shall live from age to age on the lips of men, but in some one of its innumerable minor forms: *e.g.* the love of being respected, and of being well spoken of among their companions and neighbours. For this they work and toil day and night, for this they are ready to sacrifice not only pleasure but interest—and in the attainment of it they have their *full* reward.

There are others, again, who seek for pleasure in some one of the endless forms of enjoyment in which our many-sided human nature takes delight. I do not refer to the grosser forms of pleasure which a man's physical nature as well as his conscience condemns,

but to those which the world sanctions, and even good men covet. They seek for these, and they do not seek in vain—but in finding them they have their *full* reward.

There are others who seek for power; not always in the higher form of political power, but it may be only in the minor phase of influence—of having their opinion followed and their actions imitated. This is what they seek, and this therefore is what they have; but this is *all* they seek, and therefore is *all* they have—and in it they have their *full* reward.

There are others who seek for *knowledge;* whose aim in life is to *know*, and so to *teach;* who devote to it noble energies and great abilities, and pursue it with a zeal which is in itself almost a moral virtue. They seek, and they obtain; they do good, it may be, to other men, and make a permanent contribution to the world's store of knowledge; but it stops here—and herein is their *full* reward.

And there are others, again, whose object in life is merely the acquisition of wealth; who rise up early and take rest late—planning and scheming hour by hour, in order that no day may be without its gain; no effort is too great, no toil too severe provided only that it will add to their store. This is their *passion*, and its gratification is their *full* reward.

And there are others, lastly, who have no definite aim beyond life itself; they go on from day to day, living from hand to mouth, quite content with their life if no great exertion is required of them, and no

great trouble crosses their path; their desire is simply to live out in peace the ordinary span of human existence, and to die at last in comfort in their beds. This is all they seek, and in this is their *full* reward.

In thus glancing over some of the many phases of human life you will see how thoroughly this law of our life holds good—the work is followed by its reward, the *kind* of reward corresponds to the kind of work. For it is a mistake to suppose that our Lord in the text is using the language of irony. The reward of which He speaks is not *permanent*, but it is not *illusory*. It is not true that wicked men always fail and are unlucky—that there is no enjoyment in the possession of godless wealth, no delight in the pursuit of godless pleasure. The very *point* of our Lord's remark lies in the assertion of the contrary. These Pharisees of His days had for their aim in life the attainment of a reputation for religion; all that they coveted was to be well spoken of for their "long prayers;" and they *were* well spoken of, they *had* that praise of men which they sought for; and, *in having* it, they had, our Lord says, their *full* reward.

So it is with men now. The reward which they seek they have *in full*. But what is it? It is money which they cannot take with them into the grave; it is knowledge which passes away; it is reputation which an idle slander may blast; it is pleasure which is consumed in the attainment: this is all they seek and this is all they have.

And what then?

The story which we read in the Gospels tells us the rest. "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." He was not absolutely wrong in thus using his wealth as wealthy men do—in having a large house and keeping a good table. He is not described as having been a bad man in the eyes of the world. He may not even have been so uncharitable as we sometimes imagine—for there is nothing to imply that the broken meat was *not* sent out to the beggar who lay at his gate. He was simply a man who lived for this world and cared for nothing beyond: this was all he sought for—and when he had found this there was no more for him to receive. His greatness ended with his funeral. And after that, we read—"he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."

What is it, brethren, let us ask, as we think of this sad story—what is it for which *we* are seeking? For we, too, come beneath this universal law: *we*, too, are seeking: though we may never put it definitely and consciously before ourselves, there is something which lies at the end of all our exertions—something the attainment of which will give us more or less satisfaction. We too are sowing—and as we sow we shall reap: Is it to the flesh, or is it to the Spirit? Is it to self, or is it to God?

And let none of you, brethren, yield to the temptation that you are too *young* to be sowing yet: for the law holds not only with all classes of men but with all periods of life. As soon as we are conscious of acting

at all we are beginning to sow for the future. These years of youth which pass so pleasantly and seem so harmless—which you hurry through with a quick step and a light heart—are the spring and early summer of the soul: the crop may not be so apparent nor the power of the influences which act upon it so marked, and yet on them as much as, or more than, on the ripening sun of later summer the character of the harvest depends. Let me urge you then—if you have not done so as yet—*now at last* by God's help to set before yourselves the attainment of an end which will gather up your best energies on earth, and which will not fail you when your life on earth is ended. The choice must be *your own:* choose this world with its lower life, its passing joys, its uncertain success; or choose the Kingdom of God, with its pleasures that cannot fail—and its sure hope of immortality. And when you have chosen, do not deceive yourselves as to what you have to do; the work of living the Christian life is a REAL one; it is no casual or occasional thing; it calls for *untiring energies* and *unceasing care.* You would *work* to obtain earthly things, and *work* is the condition of God's gift of heavenly things. The life of holiness does not come upon us like a sudden gust of wind: it must be sought diligently if we would find it, it must be worked out "with fear and trembling," even by those who have most hope of salvation.

But though the work be great the reward is great also: seek to live the Christian life, seek to show to those among whom you are thrown that faith in Christ

can make you strong and pure and noble; that it can uphold you in difficulty, support you in temptation, and carry you safe through the bitterest trial, and the reward even in this life shall be a peace which the world cannot give—a happiness which none but the Christian can know.

Let this, then, be your choice: if you seek for earthly things, you may find what you seek—but they will perish *with* you, perhaps *before* you. But if by God's grace you set your affection on heavenly things, and live the higher life which is possible to you: if you *will*—you will not indeed escape trouble or temptation or sorrow, but you will have with you the ever-abiding presence of your Lord, the never-failing comfort of His Spirit, strengthening your human weakness, and lightening your earthly darkness, until you receive at last that which is not the reward, but the "gift of God"—the gift of eternal life.

SERMON IX.

THE PLACE OF CONTROVERSY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

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[*St. Mary's, Oxford*, 1876.]

"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—GAL. vi. 15.

IT is remarkable to notice how large a space in the history of mankind is occupied by controversies about religion. Other kinds of controversy are local and partial. There have been in past times, and there are now, many controversies about politics. But controversies about politics are not always possible. They imply not only an amount of interest in public affairs which is not always felt, but also an amount of political freedom which is not always enjoyed. In the times and in the countries in which St. Paul lived, for example, there might be, and there was, a question among his fellow-countrymen whether they should or should not revolt against the Roman rule; but controversy, the discussion of public questions, writing, speaking, arguing about the best mode of government, was impossible. There have been, and there are now, controversies upon literary questions. A large pro-

portion of the literature which exists in the world is occupied with discussions as to the authorship of particular books or the merits of particular authors. But literary controversies, from their very nature, appeal only to a limited class of the community. It is impossible for the great mass of mankind, even in the most cultivated age, to care much about the date of Homer or the genuineness of a work of Aristotle.

It is otherwise with religious controversies; they have existed at almost all times, and in almost all countries; and sometimes, as, for example, in the early days of Christianity, and at the period of the Reformation in Europe, they have absorbed all other controversies into themselves, and have gathered, as it were, into a single focus all the scattered energies of men.

But although religious controversies have almost always existed, and although the great issues of religious controversies—the fundamental questions of all creeds—are few in number, and necessarily the same in kind, the particular forms which they have assumed, the particular points to which they have narrowed themselves, are almost infinitely various.

At one time the Christian Church was torn by a dispute as to the day on which the Resurrection should be commemorated. It was contended by one party that it ought to be always a Sunday; by the other party that it ought always to be the same day of the month, whether a Sunday or no. It was contended later on, by one half of Christendom, that the cycle for

the computation of the Paschal moon should be one of ninety-five years; by the other half of Christendom, that it ought to be one of eighty-four years; and in the early history of Christianity in England there is perhaps no religious question which fills a larger place.

Again, the Christian Church was divided by the subtle question—reaching deep into the essence of the Godhead, and straining after an exactness of knowledge which it seems hardly possible for a creature to attain—whether, when our Lord said that the Spirit of Truth proceeded "from the Father," He ought not also to have added explicitly the words we added in our creed just now, "and the Son." For asserting the affirmative, the whole of Eastern Christendom separated itself, and to this day remains separated, from the whole of the West. For asserting the negative, the head of Western Christendom placed the head of Eastern Christendom under the ban of perpetual excommunication.

Again, there was no small division between those who had joined in fighting a great religious battle, and winning a great moral victory, as to whether children could or could not be made members of the Christian Church, and as to the precise quantity of water which was necessary to constitute an efficient baptism. There were earnest men who faced contumely and imprisonment, and even death itself, for the belief that to be baptized at all a man must have come to years of discretion, and that to be baptized efficiently the water must cover his body.

And again, there was a controversy, which in this very country of Great Britain has split up the Established Church into two divisions, whether the regulation of the Church and the exercise of discipline was committed by our Lord to single officers, ór to committees and meetings of elders. And I need not remind any of you who are familiar with the history of our country how bitterly the controversy was fought out, and how pitilessly the advocates of episcopacy on the one side, and of the presbytery on the other, robbed, pillaged, imprisoned, and murdered each other.

Now the particular controversy which was most keenly contested in St. Paul's time, and which is spoken of in this Epistle to the Galatians, was whether it was necessary for a Christian to be circumcised or no. Even in those first, and, as some think, purest days of the Christian Church, and even between the Apostles themselves, the question was hotly debated, and bitter words passed to and fro.

It was contended on the one side that Christianity was but a phase or form of the earlier religion which God had sanctioned, and that the ceremonial which had been enacted with so much minuteness of detail was not intended to pass away, but to be good for all nations and for all times. It was contended on the other side that the revelation which God had made in early times was partial and incomplete, and that the regulations which He had sanctioned for the Jews were in their very nature temporary, and were from the first intended to pass away.

"Circumcision or uncircumcision?" was the question. "Circumcision!" shouted the Jew, zealous to bring the Gentile world within the pale of the Mosaic legislation. "Uncircumcision!" shouted the Gentile, seeing that the family of God was wider than the family of Jacob. "Circumcision!" cried the Jew, looking back, as he did, upon the splendid ritual of the Mosaic Church, upon the splendid achievements of Hebrew history. "Uncircumcision!" cried the Gentile, looking back, as he did, upon the long array of great names and famous deeds, upon the width and length of the new world which had to be won, upon Christ who had made them free. "*Neither* circumcision *nor* uncircumcision!" cried St. Paul, "but a new creature."

These words of St. Paul are the master-key to all the controversies which have raged or are raging still within the Christian Church, or within the still wider sphere of the religious life of mankind.

They mean this:—

The one absolutely necessary thing to us as Christian men—to us as children of God into whom the Spirit of God is breathed—is not that we should be technically right in this or that practice, not that we should be theoretically right n this or that doctrine, but that we should be "new creatures"; that we should have risen above the lower, earthly, brutish part of us, the sensual, degrading, animal impulses, into a better and higher life, to a nobler and holier creed, to a diviner and more spiritual temper. The one paramount precept of the Christian religion and of all religion, is—Be better

than you have been: be purer, be braver, be sincerer, be truer, be kinder, be less of the animal and more of the man, have less of the old Adam and more of the new—be, in short, "new creatures."

And to us whose lines are fallen upon days of much talk and many disputes; to us who, with all our interest in political, social, and even literary questions, feel a still keener interest in some questions of religion; to us, with our wranglings of divided churches and opposing sects, of fiery pamphlets and impassioned speeches, of lawsuits and inhibitions, of Acts of Parliament and Judicial Committees, this great maxim comes home with especial force,—"neither circumcision nor uncircumcision," neither Protestantism nor Catholicism, neither Evangelicism nor Ritualism, neither Episcopacy nor Presbyterianism, neither Church nor Dissent,—but a new creation, a new fashioning of our nature, a reconstruction of our motives, a substitution of truthfulness for insincerity, of trust for despondency, of charity for selfishness, of courage for cowardice, of the sense of brotherhood for the lifting of every man's hand against his neighbour.

And yet St. Paul, who lays down this maxim, was himself a great controversialist. This very Epistle of his from which the text is taken is a controversial Epistle. There seems, at the first glance, almost a contradiction between his precept and his practice.

But you would carry away a very erroneous impression if you thought, either that the Apostle meant, or that I have been trying to persuade you, that contro-

versy is absolutely useless, that any man may believe what he likes, and that the search for truth is an idle quest.

It *is* of consequence that we should have well-grounded beliefs; it *is* of consequence that we should not let the marvellous powers which God has given us for finding out the truth grow rusty from disuse; it *is* of consequence that we should ascertain for ourselves what God has said and what He has not said; it *is* of consequence that we should not pick up our opinions haphazard, and let them lie like loose stones upon the surface of our minds, ready to be kicked away by any passer-by. But it is of vastly greater consequence that all through our search for truth, or our controversy with supposed errors, we should remember that belief is subordinate to practice, and that the highest knowledge which it is possible for us to hold fades into obscurity when compared with the love of God and the love of men, with the endeavour after a holy life, and the active effort to do good in our generation.

For that which "availeth" is the "new creature" —the getting rid of prejudice, and selfishness, and impurity, and greediness, and intemperance; that which "availeth" is the re-formation, the regeneration, the transmutation of our lower nature, the earnest search for truth, the spirit of kindliness towards those whose results are different from our own, the spirit of humility in the acknowledgment that we know only in part, the spirit of industry in the determination to find out as much as we can. The attainment of

knowledge may be, and is, in itself a part of that new creation to which we should aspire, a sign and proof that the old Adam of idleness and arrogance and intolerance has not an undisputed sway. But that which "availeth" is the spirit of search rather than the fact of attainment, the spirit of charity rather than the having just one grain more of truth on one side than on the other.

Some day truth may dawn on us in its fulness, rising like the sun upon the unflecked sky of new-born and sinless souls; some day, in another world than ours, it may be given to us to stand upon the sublime height of perfect knowledge above the cloudland and the storm; but here and now—where at best we know so little, and while all our lives long we can but see dim outlines of reality—here and now, while life is so awfully short, and the realm of the unknown so awfully vast, it will not restrict our knowledge, it will certainly widen our charity, to know that controversy means so little, to know that goodness means so much, to know that "neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision," but the daily growth in calmness, and love, and self-control which St. Paul calls a "new creation."

SERMON X.

WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD

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[*St. Mary's, Oxford*, 1876.]

"Without God in the world."—EPHESIANS ii. 12.

ONE of the first, and one of the strangest, objections that was ever urged against Christianity was that it was a godless religion. The technical charge upon which several of the first martyrs were condemned to death was that of Atheism. A great satirist in the middle of the second century treats Atheist and Christian as synonymous terms. When the Emperor Constantine embraced the Christian faith, he was said to have embraced an atheistical opinion; and the same term of reproach summed up the calumnies which Julian flung at the faith of his baptism when Paganism was flickering to extinction.

It is not difficult to account for the charge. The current religions of the Roman world were not only religions in which there were many gods; they were also religions in which the gods, with many varieties of attribute, were but exaggerated men. They were conceived as having more than human power, and sometimes more than human wisdom. They exhibited

upon a grander scale the ideal virtues, and sometimes also the actual vices, of contemporary society. They loved and hated; they had banquets and dances; they made merry and were sad. They were men and women through and through. They could be, and they were, exhibited in human form. The ideal of perfect manhood and perfect womanhood was not merely a symbol of, but a close approximation to, the Divine reality. The temples and the very streets were full of statues of deities and deified men.

But of the God whom the Christians preached no statue was possible. He that "made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands: neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needeth anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things." There was no visible temple. There was no visible sacrifice. There seemed to be no link to connect Him with humanity. He in whom the Christian preacher lived and moved—breath of His breath, thought of His thought, soul of His soul—was inconceivable to the average Polytheist, whose deities were definite and almost tangible realities. A God who was everywhere seemed to be nowhere, and those who believed in Him were condemned as Atheists—as being "without God in the world."

St. Paul takes up the current word and flings it back upon those who had used it. You Gentiles, he says, were Atheists; you who were "dead in sin," you who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," you

who were "without Christ," were also "without God. And the early Christian writers who followed St. Paul were at great pains to show that the retort was not only telling but true. With much elaboration of argument they showed that the current conceptions were degrading and base; that the idea of God was altogether inconsistent with the narrow attributes which were popularly attributed to Him; and that the sublimer picture which the Gospel drew was no evanescent shadow.

So far the words of the text have an historical, but not a personal interest for us. From another point of view they come home to almost every one of us. There is a tendency in modern times which very much resembles the tendency of the opponents of the early Christians. It is not infrequent to find men framing a narrow conception of God, and giving hard names to those whose idea cannot be expressed in precisely the same form of words, or fills a wider circumference. The discoveries of modern times have made almost as great a chasm between the conception of God which was entertained by the average Christian three centuries ago, and the conception at which we can arrive now; as existed between the gods of the Greeks and Romans and the God whom Paul preached and in whose faith the early Christians died.

When the earth was conceived as the centre of existing things round which all other spheres revolved; when the sky above us was conceived as a solid surface, far off, indeed, but still at an appreciable distance, in

which the stars were mere openings through which the light of the empyrean shone; and when, to take the other pole of creation, the realm of existence was almost bounded by human sight; when it was not and could not be known that hundreds of thousands of atoms go to the making of a single seed, and that a tiny drop of water may contain a world of living things,—it was altogether inevitable that a narrower conception of the Divine nature should prevail than that which tends to prevail now. We men were altogether more important persons in the universe. The "nothingness of man" was not so completely branded into him. The power, the wisdom, the goodness of God, even then seemed vast, and were spoken of as infinite; but it was impossible to realize that vastness; it was impossible to bring it home to the imagination in the way in which it is possible now—not merely to anyone who studies nature profoundly, but to anyone who will look out just for an hour on a starlight night upon the suns and worlds and systems of worlds which shine out upon his view.

The result of this widening of the known sphere of God's operation is that many persons who have made nature their especial study are so penetrated with the idea of the vastness of the world which God has made, and have their imaginations so expanded with the habitual conception of its boundlessness, that some of the ways in which God has been described, and some of the modes in which God was once conceived to manifest His especial presence, no longer correspond to their conception. The words seem too narrow, the

theory seems too imperfect, to account for the magnitude of the facts which lie before their view.

But it has happened that just as the early Christians were called Atheists for opposing the popular conception and trying to bring the world to a wider and truer conception of God, so also many of those who have conferred on Christianity itself a great and lasting service, by unfolding to us the unimagined vastness of "our Father," have earned for their reward the epithet of Atheist,—the accusation flung without mercy and without stint that their God is no God at all.

And just as St. Paul was able to retort the charge upon the Gentiles of his day, so some of those who have gained a larger conception of God can retort it upon many of those who think that they have hit off to a letter the exact way in which they should define Him.

There are some persons who come to church, and are quite orthodox in their beliefs, who are yet as much as ever these Gentiles were "without God in the world." Their religion is so mean a thing, and the part which God plays in it is so insignificant, that it might almost be omitted altogether. There is no feature more marked on the face of contemporary religion than its pettiness. It is a religion of commonplace—of the matter-of-fact respectability which is the ideal life of the average Englishman; or if it be not that, if even there be a spark of enthusiasm in it, it becomes a religion of paltriness and trifles, of saying exactly the right shibboleth in exactly the right tone, or of burning exactly the right number of candles with precisely the

right amount of incense. I am very far indeed from asserting that all of you to whom it is my privilege to speak have no other and no better religion. But yet the number of those to whom God is anything more than a mere name in the background is terribly small. It is so perhaps from habit rather than from intention; but it is so beyond question. One of the results of the education through which all of us, in greater or less degree, have passed, is that we deal with words rather than with things, *i.e.*, we hear the spoken sounds, or we see the written characters, without picturing or attempting to picture to ourselves the realities which those sounds or characters represent. It is especially so with this most sacred and most solemn of all words. It has become to many of us a name and nothing more. It does not bring before us any vivid picture. It suggests to us a crowd of collateral and subordinate questions; and the tendency of the mind is to dwell upon the last and minutest of these questions rather than upon the great permanent fact, the great unchanging reality, in comparison with which the questions upon which our attention rests are but as the moss that grows on the mountain side.

This is being "without God," because the idea of God is so far shut out from our thoughts as not to enter into the sphere of our motives, or to have any direct effect upon our conduct. The proof lies in the practical result.

Is it possible that, if once you realised the idea of God—the perfectly Holy, the perfectly Just, the perfectly

True, standing as it were by your side, watching you as you speak, and knowing what you think—you would dare, as some Christians do dare, to tell a lie?

Is it possible that, if once you realised the idea of God—the Almighty Creator of yourselves and all you see, the Eternal Upholder of all life that is and has been, waiting, so to speak, for your recognition, and listening to your prayer—you would wrangle, as some Christians do wrangle, as to which way they shall turn their faces when they worship Him?

Is it possible that, if once you realised the idea of God—the Almighty Father whose arms are round you even when you stray farthest from His presence, whose breath is within you in every lofty thought you breathe—you would make a form of approaching Him, as some Christians do approach Him, with a babble of words which, so far from meaning, they do not even understand?

Is it possible that, if you and I realised to ourselves only an infinitesimal part of the grandeur, the majesty, the awful sublimity, which even at this very moment is not far from every one of us, we should be the mean, despicable, selfish creatures that we sometimes are in our daily lives?

"Without God in the world:" it may be a picture of you and me,—you and me, with all our talk about religion, and all the fine names we give ourselves for our orthodoxy.

"Without God in the world:" in one sense it is impossible, for neither in the heights above nor in the

depths beneath is it possible for His creatures to escape Him: but it is altogether true, as far as *we* are concerned, when we live in habitual unconsciousness of Him.

And yet there is not any one of us who may not, like the Patriarch of old, "walk with God." Sit down calmly for once and try to fill your imagination with the thought of the Infinite Fatherhood which embraces in its love, not only you and me and men like ourselves, but every living thing; not only this world and all that is in it, but all worlds that have been and that are. Think of that Infinite Fatherhood as not far off but very near, near enough to watch the faintest aspiration and to hear the unspoken prayer. Realise to yourself that all you do—the small things as well as the great, the mean things as well as the noble—are done in His presence; and if you do this, if only once the fact of that presence seizes hold of your consciousness and is pictured to your soul, it will be a new and purer and controlling element in every motive, moulding your conduct as well as your beliefs, and influencing your lives from hour to hour. Then, but not till then, will your lives be like the life of Him who even in His humanity was able to say, "I and my Father are one." A meaner ideal is the ideal of many Christians. A meaner ideal was the ideal of these Ephesian Gentiles to whom Paul preached: "the times of that ignorance God winked at." But you and I are not Ephesian Gentiles, and if we are "without God," we are "without excuse."

SERMON XI.

THE GOD OF HOPE.

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*THE GOD OF HOPE.**

"The God of hope."—Rom. xv. 13.

THE voice that spoke from this place last Sunday afternoon is hushed and silent; the face that you saw here then is a face that you will see no more. Yonder churchyard holds all that was visible and audible of a soul that is now with God.

And while the memory of him is as fresh as the pain is keen, I, who knew him best, must tell you, who had scarcely time to know him yet, what kind of man he was.

Across the horizon of our lives there has passed one of those characters which are so rare as to be remarkable. The characters of most men fall under one of two classes: they are either characters to be admired or characters to be loved. There are some characters to which, though we admire them, we cannot cling: there are others to which we cling, but which we feel to be weak. But the special feature of the character

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* Preached at Birchanger Church, on the second Sunday in Advent, 1877, upon the occasion of the sudden death of the Rector, the Rev. W. M. Hatch, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford.

which has passed away from us was its combination of gentleness and power. It had each of these qualities in an intense degree: it was as lovable as it was strong. The feature of it which perhaps struck men most was its exquisite and subtle tenderness. He won the hearts of all who knew him. There was fascination in the delicate sensitiveness of his manner and in the soft music of his voice. Children drew close to him while he lived, and old men wept when he died. In every word and every look there was a sympathy as penetrating as it was profound—a sympathy "that could be felt." But even of sympathy there are two forms: there is a selfish sympathy which makes the imagination of the feelings of other men merely an intensification of its own; and there is an unselfish sympathy which is of all features of human character the highest and the most divine. It sympathises not for the sake of a reaction upon self, but out of pure and passionate generosity. It is not passive but active. It cannot rest content with feeling, it must be doing. It becomes self-sacrifice. It utterly forgets self in order to make others happier, wiser, better men. This gift God had given to my brother, and this gift he used. Sympathy was ever passing into self-sacrifice, and self-sacrifice was ever showing itself in energy. Unsparing of himself, unresting, and unwearied, he gave himself up to do good to others—to win their hearts and to mould their convictions, and to lift them to a higher level of knowledge and of character. At the cost of thought and labour, at the cost of anxiety and sorrow, at the cost of

weary days and sleepless nights, at the cost of health and the cost of money, and the cost sometimes of reputation, and the cost at last—as we all sadly know—of life itself, he was obeying the Divine impulse which filled him to try to make men better than they were before. There is a saying that "Genius does what it must, but talent does what it can." There was this attribute of genius about my brother. Necessity was laid upon him; there was no possibility of evasion; he *must* preach his Gospel, though in preaching it he were to die. It was no question with him, Will another service hurt me? Will another effort weary me? The passionate determination of his will thrust prudence roughly from its path; it was at once impelled and inspired by the overmastering consideration, "There is work to be done for men and for God; do it I *must*, and do it I *will!*"

For you and me such a life and such a character are impossible. For you and me the rule of life is prudence. For you and me, who have children looking to us for bread, the first of all duties, and the highest of all religions, is not merely to use the gifts of God, but to use them with judgment and with economy. And yet if life were all prudence it would be intolerable. If passionate generosity ceased to exist, if the realisation of impracticable ideals were never attempted, if nothing were done but what sober men thought likely to succeed, if there were no glory of golden sunsets at the end of our gloomy days, if there were no seeming waste of fragrance and blossom on the hedgerows of our weary

roads,—this dull, sad life of ours would be a burden that we could hardly bear. And what the sunset is to a grey and leaden sky, what the summer flowers are to the common prose of a country-side,—all that, and more, more perfect in its poetry and more profound in its meaning, is such a life as that which has passed away to your lives and mine. Imitate it exactly we cannot—and if we could, we should not; and yet, out of its sublime unselfishness, out of its Divine devotion to the sense of a great duty, may come to you—there will live in me to my life's end—the sense of a better motive, and the stimulus to more unselfish action.

What is the story of his life?

He began with no great advantages of birth or station, and in this keen competition of life—in which there are few to help you when you struggle, and fewer still to pity when you fall—it is no slight victory for a youth to fight his way almost single-handed to the position which he won. Nearly sixteen years ago he entered the University of Oxford. His career there was a distinguished one. He was in the front rank of his contemporaries. He might have stayed there to this day, living the quiet life of a college tutor; and there was great promise that, if he had done so, he would have gained for himself a name among those who influence mankind in the higher paths of thought. His intellect was essentially philosophical. He had a keen insight into the subtler issues of great questions. He had just enough dreaminess to be speculative, and although his bent was rather critical than constructive,

he could not only analyse a theory but frame one. But he had a passion for education of another kind. He loved boys, and he found that boys loved him. He resolved to devote himself to educating them. He was possessed with the idea that much of the education of boys in England is based on a mischievous separation of moral and intellectual from religious culture. He thought that the two might be blended into a perfect harmony, and that the chapel rather than the hall or class-room should be the centre of school life. In the important institution to the headship of which he was soon appointed, the noble theory which he conceived is still being carried into practice. The splendid chapel with its living services is a visible record of what he did. He left it to others to carry on, while he himself endeavoured to form a still nobler institution in another part of the country. But there the ways of the world baffled him; legal difficulties and other obstacles came in the way, and he left the scheme incomplete to do what good he could here among you. How he worked here you know better than I can tell you. These walls which by his efforts were made more like the walls of a House of God; these services which by his efforts and your co-operation have received a new spirit, bear witness to what even in a few months a man of his type may do. For you to the last he spent himself. If he had economised his energies, he might, humanly speaking, have been preaching to you now. But his spirit was as eager as his flesh was weak. Last Sunday afternoon—just a week ago to the very hour—he

preached his last sermon; he sang his last hymn; there was just time enough for him to lay aside the robe in which he had ministered: he sank down exhausted in his chair; the "Angel of Mercy" was waiting for him; the Advent which he had preached was come.

It was the very poetry of death.

Is this all? You will perhaps wonder that I even ask. The very meaning and purpose of our being here is to say that it is not all. What is this but "the Lord's Day"—the Day of the Resurrection? What is this but Advent—the commemoration of the Lord's first coming, the anticipation of His coming again?

And yet for all that I ask, "Is this all?" For this is one of those times when we have to probe to the very deepest depths of things. One after one our kinsmen and our friends join the awful procession which is always in movement and always gathering strength. One after one the actors disappear from the great stage of life in which we too are playing our parts, and from which we too must follow them. There comes or seems to come to us, as a faint and unsubstantial vision against a background of gloom—a faint and solemn whispering in the stillness of the night. But where they are and what they are we cannot tell, and we are not told. There are, no doubt, some who think that we are definitely told in the Gospels. They think that, for example, the story of the rich man and Lazarus is not an adaptation of the current beliefs of the time to a striking lesson, but an intentional revelation of the actual world to come. It may be so: but since the

question whether it is so depends on the correctness or incorrectness of a particular method of interpretation, it may also not be so. We must go deeper than that. Surmise and poetry and questions as to methods of interpretation are not enough for us. We are here face to face with realities so awful that we must at least pause to look at them. Once only can we be born: once only can we die. These two facts, the one at the beginning of our life, the other at its end, are the most momentous personal facts that we can ever know. They are so momentous that all other knowledge in the world fades into insignificance in comparison with them. With the one fact we are familiar every day. We are indeed so familiar with it that it escapes our notice. Like the shining of the sun, like the growth of plants, like the alternation of waking and sleeping, this ever-present fact of our having come into life and our living now surrounds us and penetrates us. It has ceased to be a wonder. We live, and we accept the fact of our living; and life, moreover, is so full of work which must be done, that it would be a frustration of its obvious purposes if we stopped still, as we might well stop still, to contemplate the wonder of it. But just for a moment—now that the sudden passing away of our friend compels us, whether we will or no, to pause—think what it is to *live*. Out of nothing, or next to nothing, we have come to be; out of the vast and shapeless mass—vast eddies, as we are told, of impalpable and invisible gases —which preceded the days of creation, has come the

world of which we are part, with all its marvellous variety of phase and form—sunlight and starlight, trees and flowers. Out of an atom is developed a man. How the atom itself comes into being none can tell. How it should result in you and me—in the eyes which see, and the brain which thinks, and the busy hands which move—is a mystery to which, with all our knowledge, we have scarcely a clue. Think of all this, I ask you, if but for a moment: and then turn to the twin mystery of death. It is the lesser of the two. The marvel is not that we should cease to live, but that we should live at all.

It is because of this—because, that is to say, we have among us, as the most certain of all facts, this inexplicable mystery of life—that we have hope of life in death. Look at a dead man's face—at its still and awful powerlessness—and you will be tempted to think it impossible that he should live again. But listen to a living man's voice, as it climbs the heights of thought, or sweeps through the chords of passion, and reflect whence all this has sprung, and you cannot help but imagine that the bridge between life and death is subtler than we know. The Power that evolved all this from an atom can keep it, though it seem to cease to be. This is the last word of modern thought, it is the last word also of the ancient faith. It was breathed from the mouth of the Hebrew prophet when the inspiration passed through him, "Behold, all souls are Mine" (Ezek. xviii. 4). It was expressed in that still diviner saying of our Master, "All live unto Him"

(Luke xx. 38). It may seem a meagre Gospel to preach, and yet it sums up all that we need know. Upon the manner of the life "beyond the veil" both the Bible and the Church are awfully and significantly silent. There are magnificent pictures which Christian painters have painted of it. There are magnificent poems which Christian poets have sung. But just as the "Old Fathers" had no fuller and yet no profounder teaching than that of the great unknown philosopher, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them:" so also the teaching of our Lord, the teaching of the Apostles, the teaching of the Church Universal, has no fuller and yet no sublimer utterance than the triumphant ending of its most triumphant hymn—"I LOOK FOR THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME."

I have only two other things to say—one about my brother, the other about ourselves.

Common talk speaks of a "premature" death. Common talk speaks of a career cut short and of promise unfulfilled. At first sight it seems as if common talk were correct. Think of what my brother was as you saw him last Sunday afternoon, and contrast it with the still and silent form which lies in yonder grave. It would seem at first sight as though learning, energy, and enthusiasm had all been thrown away. It would seem as though something had been lost—a flame quenched for ever in the dark; and in sorrowing for ourselves, for the loss of the living love

that he gave us, and of the living words that he spoke, we are tempted to sorrow also for him. But "in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." If God be, as we believe Him to be, a "God of hope;" if the life to come be, as we believe it to be, not a dream but a reality,—then not a power is wasted, not a fibre of the life of his soul is thrown away. That which was earthly in him has gone back whence it came; the sin has been washed away; the faults—and there were many—have perished like the dross in the furnace; the pure gold of his character is left behind. For him, disburdened, cleansed, and purified, there is some other "garden of the Lord" in which there is work to do.

For him, therefore, we may not mourn; but we may mourn for ourselves. For us remains the struggle and the strife; for us remains many an anxiety, many a temptation, and, it may be, many a sin; for us remains the constant weariness of baffled effort and disappointed hope. But for us, also, there remains the influence of his example. The memory of his character may live among us; and of all influences that act upon human life the influence of character is the strongest and the subtlest. It is an influence which, for good or for evil, every one of us exercises; but sometimes when men are dead their characters influence us more than when they were living. When they were living we saw their faults as well as their merits, and we steeled ourselves against the influence of their merits because of their faults. But, when they are dead, their merits rather than their faults come into pro-

minence. It is the light, and not the shadow, that strikes our notice and impresses itself upon our souls. So it was and so it is with him of whom we are thinking now. His loss will be a gain if we think of what was best in him, and let it work its subtle work upon our souls. There are some in whom that work is already marked and visible. There are some of the boys whom he trained from whose minds his image will never fade, and through whom the gentle power of his unselfishness, the light of the noble ideal which he tried to carry out, will be reflected upon children's children. So let it be also with ourselves—both with those who have known him lately and with those who have loved him long. A glorious light has shone and passed away; let us rather thank God for having given it than lament over its loss; let us treasure the memory of it and keep it clear; and so shall our lives—sad, struggling, disappointed, and weary, as some of them are—be brought nearer God by the hallowing, refining, stimulating power of a pure and gentle soul.

SERMON XII.

"THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PRESENT TIME."

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[*St. Mary's, Oxford*, 1878.]

"I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—ROM. viii. 18.

THESE words, like all other words of Scripture, must be taken in relation to the person who uttered them, and to the time at which they were uttered.

The Christians of that time were with few exceptions Jews. And the Jews were a hated race. They stood apart from the rest of mankind, and the rest of mankind shunned them. The common bond which binds man to man hardly existed between the Gentile and the Jew. They were scorned where they were not hated; they were loathed where they were not scorned. But the Christians were worse off than the Jews. Between the Jews there existed at any rate the bond of a great fellowship. In every important city of the East they formed a community. They clung together though the rest of men hated them. In the streets, in the market-places, in the public

gatherings, they were isolated and scorned. In their own synagogues, in their own society, this very fact of their isolation held them together in the bonds of brotherhood. There was a kind of freemasonry among them. The password of a common tongue, and even of a common physiognomy, secured for each individual Jew recognition and fellowship and hospitality. They were hated by the world, but they were loved by their kindred; and that love of their kindred was a compensation for rebuff and rebuke and ridicule. It overbore the physical hardships of persecution; it was stronger than the fear of death. But all this, though it came in time, had hardly come yet to the Christian. He was a Jew outside the pale of Jews. He was a pariah among pariahs. The very Jews would not associate with him. He was "hated of all men for Christ's name's sake."

And if in all the ranks of this hated subdivision of a sect there was one man who could be sensible of the scorn which was poured upon him, that man was the writer of these words. Born of the very bluest blood of Judaism—a Jew among Jews—educated as a conservative and a high churchman, with that bitter scorn of dissenters from his faith which then as now was the special mark of orthodox high breeding, he had come to be a dissenter among dissenters; not only a Christian, but an advocate of opinions which among Christians themselves were unpopular and proscribed. "I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death, for we

are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men. . . . We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

Nor was it all a merely moral torture. The contempt of the mass of men, the hatred of one's kin, the sense of being a heretic among heretics, a pariah among pariahs, are all capable of consolation. The inner sense of satisfaction, the conviction of duty, the "conscience void of offence," can outweigh even in less noble natures the opposition of the world outside. There was not only moral but physical torture. Wherever the ecclesiastical courts of his countrymen had jurisdiction, he received the "stripes" of a heretic. Wherever the civil courts of the Roman government took cognisance of him, he was "beaten" with the lictor's "rods" as a disturber of the peace. There was death in front; there was ignominy and torture on either hand; there was that terrible mingling of moral humiliation with physical pain which to a sensitive nature like St. Paul's is a thousand times worse than the agony of dying.

These were some of the "sufferings of this present time." They were almost more than man could bear; and yet, when put into the scale, they weighed but the weight of a feather. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

For on the other side was an overpowering hope. The vision came before him of a sublime and splendid

future in which the redemption of the sons of God would be visible and complete. It was not the common Jewish hope that the time was coming in which Jerusalem would no longer be trodden under Gentile feet, and in which they would no longer serve but reign. It was not the great panorama which seemed to rise from the western sea to the prisoner in the solitary island, the cloudland of a great sunset shaping itself into a city of God. It was more vague in its external outline, but more distinct in its inner character. It was the vision of a time in which the flesh would no longer lust against the spirit, and in which the law of sin would no longer prevail over the law of God. It was glorious, because it was godlike. The new life was to be a Divine life. The lower self, with its lusts and hates, with its passions and its strifes, would be wholly put away. The transitoriness of life, as well as its pain, would cease, for "the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal."

For this it was worth while to struggle and to wait. "If in this life only we have hope, then are we of all men most miserable." But it is not so. It will not only be that the balance will be restored, but that the compensation will be an "exceeding weight of glory." The dim reflection of Christ, which is visible in men's characters now, will become a glorious "image." The faint flickering of the Spirit's flame will become a burning and a shining light. The temptation will be gone; the struggle ended; the sadness changed to joy

unspeakable. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

I began by saying that these words of Scripture must be taken in close relation to the man who uttered them, and to the time at which they were uttered. I have tried to give you an outline of what they meant in St. Paul's mouth and in St. Paul's days. And if I stopped here, there would still have been something gained. It is something to throw ourselves into a past time, and to realise a past character. It is a widening of human sympathy, and a brightening of human intelligence to do so, even if nothing more be done.

But you would hardly be listening to me to-day if that were all that I had to say. You would hardly be at the trouble of coming, week after week, to hear a fragment of history told over and over again. You expect to hear about dead men's lives and the lessons of their lives elsewhere; and there are probably some among you who do not care much about them when you do hear of them.

But history is a parable: and when it is told as a parable it is no longer dead, but living. What "was written aforetime was written for our learning." It has a present value. The circumstances are different, but the moral comes home to you and me.

The circumstances are different: there are few greater contrasts than the contrast between St. Paul's position and our own. There has been a complete revolution. To be a Christian is no longer a mark of ignominy

and a punishable crime. The outcasts of society are not those who profess Christianity, but those who blaspheme it. There is no longer any sense in which it can be said that our profession of religion brings us into obloquy, and still less into physical pain.

But although the circumstances are different, the Apostle himself helps us to see that his words have a meaning even for the Christian world of the nineteenth century. He speaks primarily of his sufferings for Christ's sake. But he goes on to speak of the travail of the whole creation, and the bondage of corruption in which the whole human race is bound. It is not of sin but of suffering that he speaks. Suffering is no doubt conceived as the result of sin, but it is of suffering rather than of sin that he is thinking now. Whether he thought of the one or of the other, the lesson, though not the same lesson, comes home to us. For we too know of suffering, though not of suffering for Christ's sake; and in transferring his thoughts to our own times, what we have to note is the sharp contrast between the misery of the present time and the perfection of the time to come.

In all times men have been born to sorrow. The history of our race is a history of pain. Nor is it certain that, as history has gone on, the pain has lessened. We hear from time to time of the alleviations of suffering which have marked the advance of civilisation. We live in an age in which the effort to alleviate suffering forms a distinct feature in the organisation of society. We cannot look at the photograph of con-

temporary life which is contained in a daily newspaper without seeing that benevolent institutions and social improvements occupy a large place in the thoughts and efforts of civilised mankind.

But for all that, the doubt remains whether the sum total of human misery has not vastly increased. It would almost seem as though the onward march of civilisation slays its thousands and maims its ten thousands. It is almost inevitable that it should be so. The whole machinery of society is so constructed as to make the difference between rich and poor wider as civilisation increases. Wealth tends to accumulate itself in fewer hands. There is consequently not only a multiplication of the number of the poor, but a deepening of their poverty. The fact is so serious, and is becoming so prominent, that many of those who contemplate social phenomena from a scientific point of view regard it with undisguised alarm. Nor is its significance lessened by the fact that the newest of all philosophies is a philosophy of pessimism, a philosophy which is based on the conviction that we are going from bad to worse.

But whether the misery of men be more or less than it has been, it is at any rate enormous. Most of us who are here now, living as we do lives of quiet routine, belonging, as most of us do, to the respectable classes, scarcely touch the fringe of it. We have sorrows and afflictions of our own; we have social struggles and social hardships; but what are these compared with the intense and awful misery of some other classes of

the community? If I could draw but an outline of the picture, I would ask you to come with me in imagination for a moment into the by-paths of a great city, and to look at their squalor, their disease, and their almost hopeless degradation. I would ask you to look at all this, not with the eye of a theologian as so much sin, nor even with the eye of a politician as so much crime, but with the eye of a Christian as so much wretchedness; and to contrast your own quiet homes and well-nurtured frames with the puny bodies which have borne from their birth the evidence of hunger, and with the wretched dens in which they huddle together for warmth, or with the street-corners, which are worse than dens, where they shudder in the cold. Though I cannot paint it, though it is hard to imagine it, yet think for a moment, I beseech you, of this mighty seething cauldron of misery, the fire beneath which is for ever kept alive by the burning passions of lust, and avarice, and hate.

What are we to say as we think of it? What are we to tell those who are passing through it? What, indeed, are we to say, if we cannot say these words of St. Paul, and say them with St. Paul's own enthusiasm, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed"?

On the wings of that strong hope the wretchedest of men may rise; and without it life can only be to you and me, as well as to the wretchedest of men, an enigma, a struggle, and a despair.

This power of a great hope may become the power of a great temptation. This dream of a glory to be revealed has played a baneful as well as a beneficial part in the history of Christianity. As long as we ourselves are not feeling the misery of life, but only contemplate it from outside, there is nothing easier than to sit with placid countenances and folded hands, looking away from the wretchedness at our feet to the sunlit cloudland of the future. It has been the temptation of many men, and even of many good men, in all ages. It is this which underlies the tendency to monasticism which fills so large a place in Christian history, and which is not wholly absent from us now. There were monks who felt as keenly as you or I could feel the misery and wickedness which surrounded them, and who painted, in more glowing colours than any one before or since has painted, the glory of the Jerusalem that is to come; and yet who made no single effort to make the misery less or to bring the glory nearer. There are men among us still who, though not monks, but entangled in the net-work of common life, take the misery that they find there as an inevitable element of it, and wait in unmoving acquiescence, if not in placid self-satisfaction, until God sends some change. But this, so far from being hope, is rather its paralysis; for hope that does nothing is not hope, but an idle dream.

On the other hand, the power of a great hope may become the power of a great motive.

I will not now stay to show in any detail how it may

affect our relation to the "sufferings of this present time," of which I have been chiefly speaking. I will rather deal with it, and that only for a moment, in its bearings upon our own lives. There are few among us whose lives have not an element of sadness. For you and for me, as well as for the wretchedest of men, the consolations of the future are still needed. But if they come to us at all, they should come as a motive power; they should help to shape our character. It was so with St. Paul. His conception of the glory which should be revealed was not, as we have seen, so much a complete change in external circumstances as a change of the spirit and the inner life. It was a change of character and a change of power. It was the final victory of the spirit over the flesh. It involved the obligation to work towards it by new efforts after spiritual life. This is never lost sight of: "We are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." And again, after speaking of the earthly and the heavenly tabernacle, and of mortality being swallowed up in life, his inference is, "wherefore we labour whether present or absent, that we may be accepted of Him." And again, St. John, after speaking of the same hope of immortality, adds, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

That is a lesson which we may all take home. The life after the Spirit, the communion with God, the

realisation in our own characters of the character of Christ, which are the elements of the glory of the life to come, must have their beginnings in this present life below. In the struggle which this involves we may be content to live, for in the hope which it brings we may be glad to die.

SERMON XIII.

HUMILITY.

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HUMILITY.

[*University of Oxford*, 1879.]

"Be not wise in your own conceits."—Rom. xii. 16.

IT is my duty this morning to speak of the virtue of humility. The earliest references to that virtue in sacred literature show it to have been in the first instance a political virtue. It was the virtue of Syrian peasantry. The primitive distinction of classes into the weak and the strong has always been marked among the Semitic races. It was especially marked among the Syrian population of the centuries which immediately preceded the Christian era. There were but two classes, the oppressors and the oppressed. The particular governments varied, but the system was permanent. On the one hand were those who had political power, and could command military force. On the other were the peasants and peasant farmers, extracting a scanty subsistence from a gradually impoverished soil, and robbed like the fellahin of the present day by the tax-gatherers and the soldiery. The contrast expresses itself strongly in the post-

exilian Psalms, which form in many respects the most interesting part of the Old Testament Canon; it is even more strongly marked in that touching collection of extra-Canonical Psalms which is known as the Psalms of Solomon. When the LXX. translation of the Old Testament was made the two small groups of Hebrew words which were used to designate the two classes respectively were regarded as interchangeable. One group was rendered indifferently by "the proud," "the rich," "the mighty"; the other was rendered indifferently by "the poor," "the meek," "the humble." It was by the latter class, rather than by the former, that the Psalms were written, and it is to the latter rather than to the former that they appeal. Their sense is almost uniform. They are not the war songs of an era of revolution, but the lyrics of a religion of acquiescence. They accept the present supremacy of "the proud"; they look on to the future exaltation of "the humble." For that future they are sometimes impatient, but in the meantime they preach the gospel of submission. Their tone is that of a modified fatalism: "God is the Judge; He setteth up one, and putteth down another." This was humility as it was first taught. Where it is spoken of in the Old Testament it is usually to be understood in this sense. It was the moral opiate of the oppressed. It lulled the Syrian peasants into peace.

In later times there has not merely been a rebellion against this kind of humility, but a question whether it should be retained on the list of virtues at all. The

whole drift of the political teaching, which found its first great expressions in the United States of America and in the French Revolution, is apparently in direct antagonism to it. That teaching proclaims the natural equality of man to man. It asserts that political subordination has no proper place in human society. It is a doctrine which is taking new forms in our own times, and which promises to effect even greater changes in the future than it has effected in the past. I am not advocating, but only stating it; but I venture to think that it is impossible to look at the inner life of European society, at the movement of thought which is going on—perhaps more in Continental Europe than in our own country, and yet in our own country as well as in Continental Europe—without seeing that the day of political subordination is past, and that the forces of the future are operating in the direction of political equality.

Is it therefore true that, in this sphere in which its existence was first asserted, the day of humility is past, and that it is likely to have no place in the virtues of the future?

I venture to remark that however much the form of the virtue has necessarily changed under the changed and changing circumstances of widely separated centuries, that although neither the Psalms of David nor the Psalms of Solomon can be taken in their first literal sense as the political gospel of the future, still the essence of the virtue remains, that it may be both preached and exercised by those who hold most strongly the natural

equality of man to man, and that so far from being obsolete it represents still one of the cardinal virtues of a peaceful, and prosperous, and orderly society. For the essence of it even in its earliest sphere was that the rights of the individual are limited by the rights of the dominant power, and that so long as that power is dominant it is the duty of the individual to submit. And although the dominant power which is recognised under the modern conditions of society, and which will be necessarily also recognised under the new conditions of society which may conceivably take the place of those present conditions, is no longer a special group or class, but the mass of society itself, it is clear that without such a recognition society could not hang together. We could not live in a state of perpetual antagonism. We must agree upon a *modus vivendi*. But the virtue of humility not only accepts such a *modus vivendi*, but accepts it willingly. It is the willing recognition by the individual of the fact that he is but one of a mass: that his rights as an individual are limited by, and subordinate to, the rights of the mass; and that when his rights as an individual come into conflict with those of the mass they must inevitably yield. It is the virtue of political acquiescence. What facts declare to be inevitable, and what many men rebel against in spirit or in act although it is inevitable, the virtue of humility accepts in peace, and the virtue of Christian humility accepts as the ordinance of God.

But before the Canon of Scripture was closed the

virtue of humility had claimed for itself a second sphere of operation. It became not so much political as social. The conditions of the great cities in which St. Paul preached, and to which he addressed his letters, were very different from the conditions of the Syrian peasantry. There was probably no sense, or at least no vivid sense, of oppression. There were occasional instances of venal or exacting magistrates. There were probably some memories of their pre-imperial freedom. But to have preached humility as it had been preached before —the submission of peasants to their masters, of an oppressed nation to its conquerors, would have been almost as meaningless as it would be to preach it here in Oxford. It was preached to Christian communities, and, as preached to Christian communities, it was necessarily preached under a new form. The members of those communities met upon an equality which was tempered only by the existence in all organized societies of presidents and office-bearers. But those members did not all come from the same classes of society. Their equality as members of the Church was consistent with inequalities of social condition, of moral character, of intellectual culture. The philosopher found himself side by side with the fool or the madman (ὁ μαινόμενος is a common term in Stoical writers for all who were not Stoics), against whom he had pointed the arrows of his scorn. The patrician found himself standing side by side with the slave whom he had bought and scourged. The Jew with his pride of Divine tuition, the Greek with his pride of æsthetic culture, the

Roman with his pride of imperial sway, met together upon the church floor, and sat together at the sacred meal, as equals and as brethren.

It is impossible not to believe that there was at first some degree of friction. Bound together as they were by the tie of a common hope, a common enthusiasm, and even a common liability to imprisonment and death, it is still clear that there was not even in those primitive Christian communities the perfect peace of an ideal home. There were jealousies, heartburnings, assertions of superiority, refusals to submit, and strivings for the mastery. There was need of a strong inner principle of concord, and this principle St. Paul found in humility, or the sense of lowliness. In the four chief passages in which he speaks of it, he speaks of it in this relation. "Be of the same mind one towards another; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate" (or "be led captive with lowly things") (Rom. xii. 16). "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephes. iv. 1). "Fulfil ye my joy that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself" (Phil. ii. 3). "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing

one another, and forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any" (Col. iii. 12).

And in the earliest of the extra canonical writings of the New Testament, the first epistle of Clement of Rome, humility is spoken of almost uniformly in a similar connection: it is ranked with moderation and concord, in contrast to backbiting and detraction (c. 30); it is the special virtue of the members of the one body in which all are members one of another, the strong bearing with the weak, the weak respecting the strong (c. 38); and again, the greater a man's power, the greater also should be his humility, seeking not his own good, but the common good of all (c. 48). This is humility in its social sphere, as the Apostles and the great Apostolical Father preached it, and as we may conceive that some at least of the early Christians practised it; it is the voluntary surrender of the individual will to the common good—the forbearance, the conciliation, the submission of each to each, which gives play to the energies of all.

But it would be idle to conceal the fact that humility as a social virtue has fallen into disrepute. Like all the virtues which are mainly passive in their nature, it admits of being easily counterfeited. It is consequently at a discount. The parody is so common that the original has been almost forgotten. If anyone in modern times says that he is humble, even the more charitably disposed regard the expression only as a kind of μειωσις, implying that the opinion which the speaker entertains of his value is at least not below the

average. And not only has it fallen into disrepute, but even its place on the list of virtues has been questioned. As with humility in its political phase, so also with it in its social phase, men have asked themselves—Why should I be humble? Why should I even temporarily and *ex-hypothesi* put myself in an attitude of subordination to another? Why should not my wishes, my will, my purposes assert for themselves whatever place they can gain?

The answer, which is equally true whether it be society in general or Christian society which is in the view of the interrogator, is practically this—that the assertion of the will, the wishes, and the purpose of the individual is made more possible by the recognition of the fact that all others whom we meet have also their will, their wishes, and their purposes. A state of continual striving for social predominance is a state of social Ishmaelism. Civilized society would be impossible, or if possible would be intolerable, if it were only an arena from which conciliation was absent, and in which equality was at every moment asserted. And civilized society has come by the necessities of its own existence, and through the agency of those unwritten laws which are among the strongest forces that act upon human conduct, to put upon its members the restraint of mutual respect and mutual subordination. And out of the forces of civilization working with the forces of Christianity, there has come down to us that form of social humility in which all earlier forms are blended, which like all other forms of humility is easily

parodied, and yet is in itself a genuine product of a manly temper, and which by its name "courtesy" reminds us that it is, with its twin sister chivalry, the noblest bequest that was ever made by an age of darkness to an age of light.

There is yet a third sphere in which the virtue of humility has been both preached and denied; in which, though its form has changed, it has still a conspicuous place among the virtues, and a great work to do.

The Jewish teaching, not only upon matters of fact and practice but also upon matters of science and literature, was a teaching upon authority. It referred men to great names. It upheld one doctrine as against another by the preponderance of learned opinion. And in course of time the teaching of the Christian world became what the teaching of the Jewish world had been, a teaching upon authority. The interpretation of the Bible was to be settled not by reason and philology, but by a Catena Patrum. The teaching of philosophy was a handing down of great traditions. From this point of view, in the Christian as in the Jewish world, humility meant submission to authority. That which was required was sometimes submission to great names, and sometimes submission to a great organization. At one moment the authority was Aristotle, at another the Master of the Sentences. For one class of doctrines it was St. Augustine, for another the Decretals. If a theory, however slender its basis in fact or inherent probability, had the support of the current authority, it was not to be questioned; if a theory, however great

its plausibility, ran clearly counter to the current authority, it must either not be asserted at all, or if asserted the assertion must be so veiled as to look like its contradictory.

Against this the tendency of by far the larger part of modern thought has been an almost complete rebellion. The claims of authority have been absolutely denied; it is alleged that the function of the thinker is not to listen to others, but to find out for himself, and that the virtue of intellectual humility which consists in listening is the virtue only of pupilage and childhood. The result of this abandonment of authority and humility has been in some branches of knowledge an almost incalculable increase of its domain. The age in which we live has been an age of splendid exploits. In the knowledge of the constitution of the world in which we live, in the knowledge of the moral and political history of our race, in the knowledge of so much of its intellectual development as can be gathered from the study of the language in which thought has expressed itself, so much has been achieved already, and so much is being achieved every day, that the knowledge which our fathers had is becoming almost obsolete to us; and the knowledge which we ourselves have promises to be itself almost obsolete by the time that our children are men.

In face of these patent facts, and this patent tendency, and especially in a place in which the old learning and the new both find a home, it will be appropriate to consider, with somewhat more detail than I have con-

sidered either the political humility of the Old Testament or the social humility of the New, the question which, if not equally interesting to all of us, can hardly be devoid of interest to any—What place, if any, is there for humility in the active intellectual life of modern times, and of modern Oxford? How can you and I, living as we do here, assuming as we may possibly without great presumption assume that we possess, and are conscious that we possess, an average amount of knowledge, and an average degree of mental power, say that we are humble without feeling *in foro conscientiæ* that we are hypocrites as we say it?

The general answer which I propose to give is that humility in its intellectual phase, so far from being opposed to knowledge, is a necessary condition of it; that so far from being an obsolete virtue, it is one which should be fostered in the interests alike of science and of faith; that the attitude which it prescribes alike towards the facts which are cognizable without revelation, and to the truths which are only known by revelation, is the attitude alike of the scholar and of the Christian. For the essence of intellectual humility is not the acceptance without proof of that which is stated only upon authority, but the adequate sense of the relation of what we individually know to the sum of what is known or knowable, and also the adequate sense of the relation of the whole sum of what is known or knowable to the sum of the unknown and possibly unknowable.

Let us consider it for a moment or two in relation

to the facts of physical nature. We find ourselves surrounded by that of which we ourselves are part, a mass of phenomena, infinite in their vastness, infinite in their minuteness, and infinite also in their complexity. We find ourselves borne on by an irresistible impulse to observe and to classify them, to investigate the modes in which they are produced, and to note the sequences in which they occur. There is no need to take them on authority. They are an open book known and read of all men. It may be assumed that within certain limits, though there may be a dispute as to the exact limits, that book can be read. And if this be assumed, it is almost obvious that there can be no moral virtue in questioning the veracity of our senses as we read it. Humility cannot lie in the depreciation of the sight of our eyes or the hearing of our ears. If a man knows or finds out a verifiable fact, or a verifiable law, it is not the wisdom of conceit if he says that he has found it; nor is it humility, but the aping of humility, if he hedges round the assertion that he has found it with "perhaps," and "probably," and "I humbly venture to think so." But when he adds, "Because I have seen this another person cannot have seen anything else;" or, "Because I have proved this, So-and-so in this matter cannot have proved anything else," then the wisdom of conceit may be said to enter, and the virtue of humility to be absent. But at the same time that he does this he is at variance not with moral virtue only, but with the conditions of science itself. The spirit of humility and the spirit of science

agree in confining assertion to that which is known and verifiable. Both of them are limiting and conditioning. The moment that a man says, "I can show nerve force to be a mode of physical motion," and adds, "therefore mind is a function of the body"; or "I can show that the body can be resolved into this, that, and the other element," and adds "therefore there is no immortality," the addition which he makes to the facts which he observes, not being warranted by those facts and not being verifiable, is logically defective. If you express his defect in terms of intellectual science he is wanting in scientific precision; if you express it in terms of moral or theological science he is wanting in humility.

But there is the less reason for speaking at length upon the relation of humility to knowledge in the sphere of natural phenomena, because, on the one hand, scientific methods tend of themselves to be rigid, and because, on the other hand, the tendency towards excess of assertion on the part of scientific men has not unfrequently been spoken of before in this place. I propose to pass to a sphere of knowledge which for most of us has an even deeper interest, in which the virtue of humility finds a not less appropriate sphere, and in which the absence of that virtue effects an even greater mischief.

What is the attitude of humility towards theology?

I. In the first place what is its attitude towards the Bible?

The majority of us believe that God has given us a revelation of His will, and that the Bible is or contains

such revelation. Before I ask what is the attitude of humility towards such a revelation, I will ask what is the attitude of the scholar?

We have to bear in mind that that revelation was not communicated like the fancied revelation of heathen divinities in inarticulate sounds or vague signs, but that it came through the channel of human language. It was intended to convey a clear meaning to those to whom it was addressed. If St. Paul or St. John had lived in England in this nineteenth century, and had written in the language which we habitually use, the problem of the right method of interpreting that language would scarcely have arisen, and the difficulty of so interpreting it would have presumably been no more than the difficulty which we experience, which is no doubt occasionally, though not ordinarily, great, in interpreting a poem or an Act of Parliament. Now, as we all know, St. Paul and St. John lived many centuries ago, and spoke a different language from our own. But that fact, although it gives us a different subject matter with which to deal, does not affect the conditions of the problem itself. If the words had been written here and now, we should have considered what meaning here and now attaches to them; and since as a matter of fact they were uttered in Syria and Greece eighteen hundred years ago, we have similarly to consider what meaning they probably conveyed to those who first read them. This is the attitude of the scholar. It is the attitude also of humility. It is an attitude of enquiry. In the presence of a document,

whether sacred or otherwise, which is written in an unfamiliar language, the science of scholarship and the virtue of humility alike forbid us to guess at the meaning. The science of scholarship and the virtue of humility alike forbid us to say, "I do not know Greek, but I do know English, and if you will give me a fair translation I will tell you what St. Paul or St. John means." The science of scholarship and the virtue of humility alike forbid us to say, "I do not know the language which was current in Syria in the first century of our era, but I do know the language which was current in Athens four centuries before, and I can guess at the one from the other." Neither the science of scholarship, nor the virtue of humility, can be content with less than the most thorough investigation which the resources at our command enable us to make into the precise value of the words under the precise circumstances under which they were uttered.

But what the science of scholarship and Christian humility alike forbid is done every day, and has been done for generations, partly in the interests of faith, partly in the interests of unbelief, and partly in the interests of those attempted compromises between faith and unbelief which have few of the benefits of the one and all the disadvantages of the other. And the general result is that the state of knowledge of the language in which the New Testament was written is such as would hardly be tolerated for a day in regard to Sophocles or Plato. If anyone habitually, and as a matter of course, ignored the monuments of

the post-Periclean age, and used only Homer and Hesiod to interpret the Greek of Plato; or if anyone wrote a commentary upon Sophocles and, ignoring all contemporary dramatists, based his interpretation of Sophoclean phrases upon analogies which he detected in Isocrates and Polybius; and if in either case he put forth his conclusions not as tentative, but as a final account of all that could be said, and as being based upon a true and exhaustive method: if on the strength of this he gave himself the airs of a great Platonist, or a great expositor of Sophocles; the verdict of scholars, and the verdict also of laymen as far as they understood the premises, would be that he was as wanting in true philological science as he was wanting in humility. It would, no doubt, be foolish to assume and idle to hope that every man who handles a Greek Testament should go through *de novo* and for himself the large mass of literature which has to be examined before the language of the New Testament can be understood. What I deprecate is not the fact that nine readers out of ten have to be content with their dictionary, but that with few exceptions, in spite of the great importance of the subject in itself, and in spite of the great interest which is shown in it throughout the Christian world, the knowledge of the language of the several writers of the New Testament is only now in its infancy.

But it is impossible for anyone who speaks in this place to forget that he is speaking in the presence of those who may hold widely different views from those

which he himself holds, as to the relation which both the science of scholarship and the virtue of humility hold towards theology in general, and the New Testament in particular.

It is competent for anyone to say, "I believe that we are not left for our knowledge of the meaning of the sacred words to the results of scholarship and enquiry. I believe that concurrently with, or antecedent to, that revelation which is contained in the Bible is the living revelation of which the Bible is the earliest expression, but which has never ceased to exist, and which, by way either of origination or of interpretation, exists still in the voice of the Church." If any one adds to this statement of his beliefs the further statement: "I believe that that voice has spoken from time to time and it speaks still. When I want to hear it, I know where to go, and when I ask it a question, I obtain an answer," his position is at least logical, and it is not inconsistent with humility in the highest phase of its development for such a man to say, "I bow my reason unreservedly before that living voice of God."

But supposing that anyone says, "When I want to know the meaning of Scripture I listen to the voice of the Church rather than to human scholarship; but I do not recognise any one existing organization as corresponding exactly to what I mean by the Church:" or supposing that he says, "I listen to the voice of the Church rather than to human scholarship, but by the Church I mean the Church as it ought to be, and

not the Church as it is; or supposing that he says, I listen to the voice of the Church rather than to human scholarship, but the Church has spoken by many voices—some of them are the real voices of the Church, and some of them are the voices of hirelings; I claim for myself the power to discriminate the one from the other, and to recognise the voice of my true Shepherd." In any of these cases I venture to maintain there is a want of logical basis which renders the position untenable on grounds of reason, and a more or less conscious arrogance which renders it antecedently improbable from the point of view of religion.

For in all of them the person who makes the assertion claims to himself the possession of a power of discriminating between a true and a false Church, or between the Church as he thinks it should be and the Church as fettered by the State, or between those whom he imagines to represent the mind of the Church, and those whom he rejects. He assumes, and there is more or less arrogance in the assumption, that one Church is a true Church, in spite of its errors, because it has maintained a particular organization; and that another so-called Church is not a true Church because it has omitted some words in the ceremony of admitting its presbyters to office; or he lays down for himself the rule that certain divines represent the real tradition of ancient interpretation, and that certain others do not—that a catena of interpretations picked from one set of divines should be accepted as true, whereas if a catena of interpretations were picked from

another set of divines the presumption would be to the contrary.

Now these propositions, which I must be pardoned for bringing forward here, because they are not only maintained, but at the present time influence the opinions and the lives of many among us, appear to me to fail, if for no other reason, at least from the conspicuous absence of the virtue of humility. For it is one thing for a man to say, "I believe, by an act of the faith which is the gift of God, that an interpreter of God's will exists, here and now, visibly and audibly, and to that interpreter I unreservedly bow." It is another thing for a man to say, "I can so pick and choose among this mass of opinions and assertions, as to be able to tell to whom I ought to listen and to whom I ought not; when a writer is uttering the mind of the Church, and when he is giving a private opinion."

In other words, the conclusion to which the science of scholarship and the virtue of humility agree in leading us is that, between the theory that the interpretation of the Bible has been committed by God to a living authority whose voice is audible, intelligible, and indisputable, and the theory that it is the object of the most careful examination which our faculties enable us to make, there is no logical mean. What grounds there are for adopting the one view rather than the other it is not my present purpose to discuss. It is not part of my argument, though I mention the fact to prevent misconception, that there appear to me to be overwhelming reasons in favour of the latter: but

for the vague eclecticism which sometimes calls itself the *via media*—for that wisdom of conceit, as I cannot hesitate to call it, which claims for itself the power, as it wanders through the many corridors of the great library in which the works of biblical interpreters are gathered together, to sniff the scents of true interpretation, and to detect from afar the odours of erroneous interpretation, there seems to me to be no sound basis either of probability or of fact, and it is to be hoped, in the interests of Christian truth and Christian unity, that it will not have in the theology of the future the place which, as I believe unhappily, it has had in the past.

II. But Christian theology does not consist wholly of biblical exegesis, and the questions which agitate men's minds in relation to that theology are not all immediately derivable from the discussion of interpretations; and I must plead the great importance of the subject, and the great mischief which, as I conceive, is caused by the want of humility in relation to it, if for a few moments I ask you to consider another branch of Christian theology in which the virtue of humility has an analogous exercise.

We find ourselves face to face, not only with a book which we believe to be Divine, but also with a mass of institutions, usages, and doctrines which, even if Divine in their origin, are not only human in their form, but also bear strong and indisputable marks of historical growth. If we lived under other circumstances; if these institutions, usages, and doctrines were all unquestioned, the attitude of humility towards them

might be simply one of submission, and the function of intelligence simply one of interpretation. And even as it is, it is no doubt competent for a man to do in regard to them what he does also in regard to the Bible, to select some one existing organization and to say, "I ask no questions; I investigate no antecedents; I take the organization as it stands; I believe this organization to be Divine, and to it I bow." The position of such a man, however untenable we may think it, is at least logically consistent, and the attitude of humility in the case of such a man lies not in the right application of reason, but in what is possibly still more difficult, the renunciation of it.

But supposing that, as is the case with a great majority of us, we do not see our way to such a supreme act of faith, supposing that we look full in the face the actual mass of phenomena which surrounds us, what are we to do when we find, as we do find, that these phenomena have not only varied in the past but are controverted now? The answer which the virtue of humility seems indisputably to give is that we cannot assume to ourselves individually the possession of a power, which the very fact of the variety of opinion shows that God has not given equally to all men, of so moving among this complex mass of institutions, usages, and beliefs as to be able to detect by instinct, and without examination, the true from the false, the Divine from the human, the orthodox from the heterodox. On the contrary, it commands us to enquire. The more searching the enquiry, the greater, that is to

say, the distrust of our power of guessing, the greater also is our humility.

On this fundamental proposition there is, I apprehend, no great divergence of opinion among the majority of us. We are ready to admit that the phenomena which present themselves in the domain of Christian theology are proper subjects of enquiry. We are ready to admit an appeal to antiquity. We are ready to admit that it is legitimate to ask, what was early belief, and how did early belief come afterwards to express itself in this or that form? What was early practice, and how did early practice come afterwards to be embodied in this or that usage? Where most of us differ is in the greater or less degree of humility with which we approach the examination of these questions in their actual detail. I hope that I may not be accused of exhibiting the arrogance which I deprecate, if I venture to assert that, of all the sciences which deal with literary as distinguished from physical phenomena, that which deals with the history of Christian institutions, Christian usages, and Christian beliefs is the least intelligently known. It is hardly possible to take up a book on any controverted point without seeing that the writings of one age are made to interpret those of another, that the meaning which technical words had in a particular period is assumed to be true of all periods, and that the vast intervals of time which separate institution from institution, and fact from fact, are ignored in a way which, if it were exhibited in any other science, would call forth beyond question one of those storms of

scornful criticism which, in these days of accurate research, sweep bad books into oblivion. And as an almost necessary result of this, when controversy comes down from the higher region of learned or quasi-learned books to the lower levels of common talk, of periodical literature, and even of young men's sermons, there is an amount of confused and at the same time confident assertion, of ignorance of technical terms, of unintelligent misapprehensions of the points at issue, which would almost justify an outside observer in alleging that theology shared with philosophy the singular distinction of being a controversy in which those who assert an affirmative misunderstand what they affirm, and those who assert a negative do not know the meaning of what they deny. And if I had to point to a typical example of arrogance I should find it not in the pioneer of physical science who, standing on some newly-ascended mountain peak—some Matterhorn or Jungfrau of the Alps of knowledge—asserted that he saw there something which was really beyond his view, but in the young dogmatist who by the simple instincts of an untutored mind, or it may be only because he had read it in a newspaper, is able to tell at a moment's notice what is catholic and what is not catholic, what is orthodox and what is heterodox, what was the belief of the first century and what was never heard of until the Reformation. All forms of conceit are no doubt reprehensible, but at the same time a distinction must be drawn between the conceit of over-estimated knowledge and the conceit of sheer ignorance.

And if I deprecate, as I cannot help but deprecate, the fact that concurrently with the growth of theological controversy there has not been a commensurate growth in theological study, and a commensurate increase of the sense of humility, I do so, not in the interests of any theory of my own, still less in deprecation of theology in general, but because the loss has been a loss not only to individuals, but to the common faith of us all, and because the presence of that of which I deplore the absence would favour the sacred interests of Christian unity, and what is still higher than Christian unity, the interests of Christian truth.

There are other aspects of humility upon which, lest I should overtax your patience, I do not now propose to dwell. I have selected those aspects of it upon which I have spoken because of their immediate importance. Just as the cultivation of humility in its political bearings is the cultivation of political peace, and just as the cultivation of it in its social relations is the cultivation of social conciliation and courtesy, so the cultivation of it in its intellectual phase is the cultivation of charity and the cultivation of truth—which are the twin Angels of the Church of God.

SERMON XIV.

DIVERSITY IN UNITY THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

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[*University of Oxford, Whitsunday,* 1881.]

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."—1 Cor. xii. 4-6.

THE analogy between the material and the spiritual world is a commonplace of preachers. It is one which in this early summer-time almost forces itself on our attention; for though the sense of the marvel of it is blunted by the constancy of its succession, we are once more face to face with the mystery of a new creation. Year after year, through untold centuries of years, has the summer died into the winter and been born again into spring; year after year when we are lying, as our fathers lie, among the unremembered dead, will the green grass of the cornfields, and the bright blossoming of the flowers, be the acted parable of the resurrection.

And year after year, as we look upon this new-born world, we are confronted with the wonder, not only

of its existence, but of its variety. There are infinite differences of individuals; no two plants are absolutely the same; every tree is unique; "the meanest flower that blows" has its own personality of beauty. There are infinite varieties of kind; every continent, every country, and even every locality, has its own special kinds. The limit to their number seems to be only the limit of our opportunities of observation. New kinds are constantly being found, and new kinds are also constantly coming into existence. For there is not only variety, but the power of variation. The type of each kind varies its expression from age to age. It is not now what it was in earlier periods of the history of our globe. It is constantly re-adapting itself to changed conditions. Life, and variety, and the power of variation go everywhere hand in hand. There is fixity and absolute uniformity only in death.

All this is the parable of human society. In the vast fields of human life natures are as various as the summer flowers. Every one of us has his own character (*χαρακτήρ*), his own special stamp of God. Every one of us has his own temperament (*temperamentum*), his own special mingling of the elements of which our nature is compounded. There clings to every one of us the inalienable sense of personality. We are ourselves, and no other; and we are so because there is none like us in the whole vast range of the universe which God has made. Nor is the difference one of individuality only; there are, even in the same community, types of character so distinct from one

another that the aims, the motives, the pursuits of one class of men are almost unintelligible to the other. Their whole mental attitude is different. They live in different worlds. The same fact has for the several classes an entirely different significance. They look upon the same landscape from an entirely different point of view, so that that which is prominent in the foreground of the one is lost in the dim distance of the other. And if we look outside any one community, there are found between different communities differences not only of mental attitude, but almost of mental structure. There are languages, for example, whose syntax is so different from our own that it is almost impossible to find for an idea which has been expressed in the one an equivalent form in the other. There are religions so different from our own that we cannot bring ourselves to see how for one hour they could be conceived as either pleasing their own grim gods or satisfying the first needs of men. And if we take a still wider view, and look not merely at contemporary life, but at the successive strata of life which make up history, we find that, just as in the physical world the types of animals or plants have assumed in successive ages widely differing forms, so in human society the same types have not been constantly reproduced. The prevailing temper of one age has not been the prevailing temper of the next. Ideas which in one age have seemed to be fundamental have seemed to another age to be illusory. Institutions which in one age have seemed to be necessary parts of the framework

of society have been discarded in another age as cumbrous scaffolding. It is hardly possible to point to a single idea, or to a single institution, which has been constant in all ages and in all societies. If we take, for example, the idea of personal liberty, to us it is almost axiomatic. We do not discuss its desirability, but assume it. We lay it down as a principle of all legislation and all intercourse. We allow it to be interfered with only in cases of strong necessity, for the safety of society as a whole. But there have been times at which it was equally axiomatic that there should be slaves. Or if we take the institution of private property. It is the largest stone in the present basis of society. It is fenced round with every barrier which society can devise. It is regarded as an indefeasible right. And yet the researches of scientific jurists enable us not only to go back to a time when it did not exist, but also to see in some existing communities institutions which exclude it.

And this movement of ideas and institutions is continually going on. We never "abide in one stay." The history of our race not only has been, but is at this moment, the history of a constant re-adaptation to changed and changing circumstances. Whether we look at morals or at politics, at ideas or at institutions, we come back to the analogy with which we began. In human society, as in the material world, variety and the power of variation are the law and symbol of life, the mode of its manifestation, and the proof of its existence.

Now if we turn from human society as a whole to

that part of it which, at various times and in various places, has accepted the Christian faith, we may antecedently expect that what is essential and necessary in the one will be also, with whatever modifications of detail, essential and necessary in the other.

If the Church were a merely artificial institution, superinduced upon human society by an external force, such a proposition, doubtless, would not hold; but if it be, as we believe it to be, human society itself—ultimately the whole, at present a part of it—redeemed, purified, and brought nearer to God, then there is no ground for supposing any change in the Divine economy in relation to it except such as arises from the fact that what was once unclean now is holy, and what was once alienated is now reconciled to God. "The multitude of them that believed," in becoming Christians did not cease to be men. The same God who made men redeemed them; the same Spirit who once "dove-like sat brooding o'er the vast abyss" informs and quickens the regenerate soul. The creation and the re-creation are part of the same Divine action; they are the work of the same co-operating Trinity; they result in analogous forms of life.

This is what we might antecedently expect, and this is what we find to have been in fact the case.

If we look back upon the history of the Church we find that its main features are, in fact, the main features of the general history of mankind. The thoughts, the tendencies, the institutions, of one age have not always been the thoughts, the institutions, the tendencies, of

the next. The basis is, no doubt, in all cases the same. "The Church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." His life and words, as they are presented in the Gospels, form a limit which Christian men cannot overpass or alter without ceasing to be Christian. So far as Christian doctrine consists in repeating those sacred words, and so far as Christian institutions have the direct appointment of the Master, variety of doctrine or variety of form is impossible. But that life and those words have suggested at various times various inferences; they have presented themselves under various aspects, according to the varying temper of an epoch or a race; just as travellers who approach a mountain on one side, and in the brightness of a morning sun, have an entirely different view from those who approach it on another side, and under a dull or stormy sky.

There have been times, for example, at which the dominant temper of the Christian world has been metaphysical. The subtle distinctions between substance, matter, and essence, which no modern student of Greek philosophy has yet succeeded in precisely formulating, were at one time the common property of educated men in the Roman world.

There have been times again in which the prevailing temper has been mystical, in which the seen and the unseen, the present and the future, seemed to be linked together by such subtle bonds that whatever could be discovered about the one was an infallible clue to the other.

When either of these tempers has prevailed, the aspect under which the life and words of Christ have presented themselves to men's minds, and the inferences which they have drawn from them, have been so different from those which we should draw in our own times that, though we may accept them as true, we are at the same time compelled to look at many of them as being only dimly intelligible.

For we in our day are passing through a different phase. Our tendency is to seek not for substance, but for sequences, and to look not at the possible, but at the actual. When we try to interpret nature or history, our tendency is to thread facts upon ideal strings, finding a theory for all that we can read of, and a law for all that we can see. When we try to interpret Scripture our aim is to find out, not what it may mean if interpreted mystically, but what it does mean if interpreted grammatically. This, too, may be only a passing phase, but for the time it is the dominant phase ; and we move so completely within it that former phases have ceased not only to have an interest for us, but also to be understood. What *οὐσία* meant in the later Greek philosophy, what it meant in the metaphysics of one school as compared with another, what "real" means in the phrase "real presence," what "substance" means in the term "transubstantiation," are questions which belong to so different a horizon from our own that few living persons are competent to express an opinion upon them. The answers to them lie, for us at least, on the other side of the great sphere

of truth, of which no mortal eye can see more than one side at a time.

And as it has been with the aspects under which the life and words of our Lord have at various times presented themselves to men's minds, and with the inferences which have been at various times drawn from them, so it has been with the forms in which, at various times, men have tried to realize the Christian society. Those forms of organization do not in any case rest upon an explicit Divine command. If our Lord had explicitly said that every church should have its bishop and its presbyters, and that all churches should be linked together in a visible and world-wide confederation, it would have been for us Christian men not to argue, but to obey. But there is no such command. Whatever is gathered from the New Testament in regard to Christian organization is gathered by way of inference, and in most cases of remote inference. And, as a matter of history, the organizations have varied widely, not only in any given age, but in one age as compared with another. The reflection of the Roman empire, which is visible in the post-Nicean effort at confederation, and that of the Roman municipal system, which is visible in the western provinces after the Roman empire fell, are different, not only in detail, but in conception, from that kind of organization which the Carlovingian emperors fostered, or that which became a necessity in the Reformed churches of Germany.

In other words, Church history tends to establish

the presumption which is raised by antecedent considerations, that in the Church, as in the world, in society in its new relation to God, as in society in its old relation to God, variety is the law of life, and that ideas and institutions not only differ, but are meant to be different. It does not follow that the Holy Spirit is not leading the Church into all truth because, in the vast area of human society, He shows this and that group of men only one side at a time: it does not follow that He is not shaping the form of ecclesiastical organization, because those forms are as varied as the types of trees and flowers. On the contrary, all this variety tends to show that the Lord and Giver of the life natural is the Lord and Giver also of the life spiritual; that the infinite variety of the one is the type and symbol of the infinite variety of the other; that beneath the one, as beneath the other, varying His operation to the varying needs of men, shaping His utterances to their varied comprehension, is the one Father and the one Spirit from whom we come and to whom we go.

The difficulty which some persons find in realising this variety of the operation of the Holy Spirit seems to arise from the vastness of its scale. Within certain limits we are all ready to admit it. We frame or accept an institution or a formula, and are ready, within the limits of that institution or that formula, to allow certain variations of detail. But we limit the variations to that which we ourselves would have been able or willing to do under similar circumstances.

We work in grooves; we cast thoughts and institutions into moulds; the possibility of giving to the same fact a multitude of expressions, and of developing the same law in an infinity of forms, passes beyond alike our comprehension and our powers. But though we cannot comprehend the ways of God, we may for all that recognize that they are not as our ways, and that the limits of our comprehension are not the limits of His action. But this is precisely what a large proportion of Christian men decline to do in regard to the history of the Church. They are almost clamorous in asserting that its builder and maker is God; and yet they commit the paradox of trying to limit the Divine operation to that which would have been probable if men had been not only the agents, but the authors of the plan. If Christianity had been an artificially devised religion, there would have been, in all probability, a single life of the Founder, and a single systematic exposition of His teaching; instead of that, there are four different lives, written apparently for different classes of minds and from different points of view. If the Church had been an artificially-devised institution, there would probably have been a single definite code of rules, and a single prescribed form of government; instead of that, there are no authoritative rules, and there is an almost absolute elasticity of form. In the one case the diversity of record, in the other the variability of form, and in both cases the contradiction of human analogies, are indications of a deeper than human unity.

This paradoxical tendency to insist upon the Divine origin of the Christian Church, and, in the same breath, to throw that Church into an inelastic human mould, is in reality the result of a confusion between two wholly different things—the eternal and Divine law of variety, and the temporary and human need of uniformity.

For purposes of association there must be, at any one time, and for any one group of men, rules and formularies. To that particular group, and for the mental horizon of that particular time, those rules and that mode of formulating Christian doctrine may be the best that can be devised. But the fact that in a particular country, or to a particular group of men, that rule and that formula are not only appropriate, but necessary, and being appropriate and necessary are part of the Divine plan, is not inconsistent with the belief that under other circumstances, or for other groups of men, other modes of statement and other rules of order are not less appropriate and not less necessary. In other words, it is competent for a Christian man to say :—

"To me, individually, there are some modes of conceiving Christian doctrine which, so far from seeming to be true, are so remote from my own conception that I cannot even place myself in that attitude of mind in which they become intelligible.

"But, on the other hand, I cannot assume either my own infallibility, or my own universality of knowledge. I am conscious that the judgments which I

form, and which to me seem incontrovertible, are the result of the complex conditions of my birth, my associations, and my training. I find that there are other men who accept, as I accept, the facts upon which Christianity is founded, whose sincerity, whose mental powers, whose love of God, are at least equal to my own, and yet who express their beliefs in forms which to me seem erroneous, and who frame their church order in a manner which seems to me to be injurious to the Christian life.

"I have no right to deny to them what I claim for myself. I have no right to attempt to limit the operation of the Holy Spirit to that particular mode which has been best for me and for men with my own mental constitution. 'For the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'"

Such a recognition of diversity in unity, of the infinite varieties of mode under which the action of the Holy Spirit has manifested itself in the past, and is manifesting itself in the present, is the modern form of the ancient conception of Catholicity. The ancient form of that conception was unity of organization. There loomed before the eyes of men the vision of a visible order, a single type of government, a single form of worship, a single earthly head. It seemed at one time to be almost realized; but the inelastic framework broke beneath the pressure of the life which it

sought to confine. The visible unity broke up, as the Roman Empire broke up; and the attempt to restore the one is as impossible an anachronism as would be the attempt to restore the other; for the "congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world," the congregation of all races, tongues, and climes, of all types of character and of all varieties of mental power, is held together by a deeper than human unity. That unity is neither the unity of compromise nor the unity of indifference. It is not the unity of an artificial form, but the unity of a Divine life. It is the unity of that Spirit whose symbol, now as ever, is seven lamps of fire. In the Church of our own time as in the Church of apostolic days, in the Church of all time as in the Church of our own time, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operation, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."

This truth has many applications and many corollaries. I shall speak to-day only of one, and that one which St. Paul has drawn for us.

When he regards the Church as a whole, he sees in it, as it were, a garden of God with many kinds of flowers—diversities of gifts and differences of operations. When he looks at the individual members of the Church the truth assumes the converse form, "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." It is this personal aspect of the truth of the text which has to be insisted upon

again and again; and insisted upon not less now than ever before, because now as much as ever before there is a tendency to merge the individual in the mass and to conceive of the Church as an abstraction, a vague and impalpable thing, apart from the individuals who compose it. But this converse statement of the great fact of the diversity of God's operations recalls us to the fact of our personality. One by one are we born into the world, one by one we die; and in all the solemn passage from birth to death, it is one by one that God holds communion with men and men with God. And one by one we have our work to do—that special and inalienable work, which, in the economy of God, none but ourselves can do. No doubt association with our fellows in the Church helps us to do it; for it gives us special means of Divine comfort; it surrounds us with the sense of brotherhood; and in all this sadness of baffled effort, this monotony of daily care, this mystery of the Spirit striving with the flesh, it gives us the help and hope which come of sympathy. But association is a means, and not an end; and for all that it can give, our work is still our own. And if our work be our own, and if the work of each one of us be different, then, side by side with the doing of our own work, must be the recognition of our brother's work. The task is hard, and it is one which few of us accomplish; for, seeing as we do with our purblind eyes some little portion of the vast whole of truth, we are not satisfied until other men see exactly what we see; and, finding some special benefit for ourselves in some parti-

cular rules of association, we try to impose them upon the rest of all mankind. But in that sublime Catholicity, which is the correlative of the infinite diversity of the manifestation of Divine life in human souls, there is no place for antagonism; and for you especially, whose powers are fresh, and who will soon have left your tutelage here to confront your life's work face to face; for you who are feeling in your souls the first stirring of spiritual energy; for you who are fired with the first and holiest enthusiasm to do something before you die, for Christ and for the world—the echo of a Divine message seems to stand forth clear and strong, telling you one by one, "Do thine own work—the work of learning, the work of self-reformation, or the work of helping to govern this Church and realm; fulfil thine own ministry—the ministry of teaching, the ministry of healing, or the ministry of peacemaking; use thine own gift—thy gift of enthusiasm, thy gift of sympathy, or thy gift of the sense of beauty. What place that work and ministry of thine will have in the mighty whole, it is not for thee to know; it is not for thy dim eyes to see the vast proportions of the temple of living stones which the Master-builder has planned; it is not for thy dull ears to hear the innumerable chords of that vast harmony which is for ever rising from the manifold creation. Let thy care be only lest the manifestation of the Spirit which is given to thee be profitless, lest the place which thou wast destined to fill be a blank, and lest the eternal harmony be—for all that *thou* hast done—a silence or a discord."

SERMON XV.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

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[*Westminster Abbey* (*Special Sunday Evening Service*) 1882.]

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."—JOHN xvii. 3.

THE most certain of all facts and the most solemn of all mysteries is the fact and the mystery of life. We all know that we are living, but we none of us know what life is. We all know that we were born, and we all know that we shall die; and between these two limits of birth and death we move from day to day and from hour to hour—some of us with the slow steps of sadness, some of us with the light hearts of untroubled youth—some of us on rugged steeps, and some of us on the dusty plain, and some of us on velvet lawns. And from day to day and from hour to hour—through all the varied panorama of passing circumstances, through all its changing moods and passions, through all its quick succession of fears and hopes, of perceptions and thoughts and dreams—the soul is to itself its own most solemn mystery. It sees the body die—one after another its companions drop

off from the solemn procession—and all that was visible of them is given back to the earth whence it came. But it cannot believe that they are utterly no more; it knows that in the same way the body which itself inhabits will one day be seen no more likewise. It sees not only the barred gate of death, but it believes that behind it there is life and God.

Age after age it has striven to pierce the darkness: age after age has seen dream after dream, and speculation after speculation, on these three forms of the same great problem,—What are we? whence came we? and whither are we going? Age after age there has been the same God-given belief that this visible world is not all existence, and that the death of the body is not the end of life. Age after age there has been the same profound conviction that the you and I who are living now will be in essence, though not in form, the same you and I who will be living on when the gate of death is passed. Age after age there has been the same baffled questioning. Here and now is that soul within us which will live for ever; and that which will constitute the life of the soul then is that which in its essence and reality constitutes the soul-life now. And what is it? When we seek for an answer we find it not in scenes, not in speculation, but in the Divine word which reveals to us: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

It may seem strange to be told that *life* is knowledge. I can understand some of you asking your-

selves as you think of it, Is the soul's life then the study of theology? Is eternity a divinity school? And will the undimmed eyes of the ransomed ones be for ever poring over the books that tell them about God? This may be the scholar's paradise, you may say, but it is not mine, only one shade less satisfying to my soul's needs than the Indian's happy hunting-ground or the Norseman's Valhalla.

But it is not so. Knowledge is a word of more than one meaning, and that knowledge of God which is eternal life has very little in common with that knowledge of Him which is called theology.

For there is a difference, and that a fundamental difference, between knowing a thing and knowing *about* it: there is a difference, and that a fundamental difference, between the knowledge which we gain from books and that which comes through feeling.

There is, for example, a kind of knowledge called astronomy. It tells us, and no doubt tells us truly, that the sun is so many miles distant from the earth, that it has such and such gases at its surface, that it moves in a certain way. All this and all else that astronomy tells us is very interesting and very useful; and the finding out of such knowledge is a fascinating pursuit.

But I know that there *is* a sun, not because astronomers tell me so, but because I see it; and I know that the sun is warm because I feel it.

It is just so with the knowledge of spiritual things. There is one kind of knowledge which is found in books, which consists in reasonings or meditations upon

what God has revealed to us, which is very interesting, very important, and which I should be the very last to disparage. There is another kind of knowledge which comes straight into the soul as the sunlight comes—which manifests not only its existence, but its nature—which tells us not only that God is there, but that God is good. The one kind of knowledge is formed by adding fact to fact, and inference to inference, in a long and laborious study. The other is an immediate, irresistible, and penetrating force.

And again, the knowledge which comes through feeling, not only forces itself upon us and tells us about itself whether we will or no, but it does all this by changing our bodies or part of them from one state into another. The sun not only tells us that it is warm, but makes us warm too.

So it is with the knowledge of God. It is not only a power, but a transforming power. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

It is in this way that the knowledge of God is our life: it is a penetrating and transforming power; it is His Spirit acting upon our spirits, until they are fashioned again in a new and holier birth; it is the communion of the Holy Ghost.

And this knowledge is possible to us *now*. It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it to us? neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us?

Here and now is this essence of the life eternal possible to us. It is the present life of the Christian soul. We know that we have passed from death unto life. It surrounds us as the sunlight surrounds us. It may be hidden from us as the sunlight may be hidden from us, when we turn away our faces and retire into the caverns of selfishness and sin.

But here and now—if you *will*, but only *if you will* —here and now in these human lives of ours, ransomed as they have been by Christ from sin, quickened as they may be by the breath of the Divine Spirit, here in these human lives, with all their mean surroundings, and with all their endless shortcomings, is this knowledge of God possible to us—this mysterious transformation of our souls into a Divine likeness, of which the life to come is but the sublimer form.

But *how* is such a knowledge possible to us? What is meant by opening our souls to the light of God, and feeling its transforming power?

I can understand that there may be some here who are ready to say, It is a mockery to tell me of knowing God and of growing like Him. It is like taking a man into the open sky when the bright shining of the stars makes us more vividly conscious than at other times of its infinity, and saying to him, "Be infinite like yonder heaven; be bright like yonder stars."

I can almost hear some of you saying, This ideal of a Divine and perfect life may be all very well for you preachers, and for those who have nothing else to do but to think of it. Come with me to-morrow to

my daily life, and see what I have to do; come with me to my shop, and see how I am filled with anxiety from morning until night, whether I shall take enough over the counter to pay my debts and feed my children and stave off bankruptcy; or come with me to my counting house, and see the keen tension of commercial life—the rivalry, the animosity, the chicanery, of those with whom I have to deal.

Or come with me to my daily toil, and see the dull mechanic pacing to and fro, and the physical exhaustion with which night after night I sink into my bed for a sleep which is too brief; and then, when you have spent just one day in the kind of life which I am compelled to live, tell me how I am to know God there.

And I can understand others again saying, You may explain it as you like, but it is still a mockery. Give me infinite power and infinite time, and I too might be good and godlike. But what would God be like, what would God do, if, instead of being infinitely powerful, He were bounded as I am bounded by the sordid circumstances and the bodily weaknesses of this mortal sphere, by the thwarting of His aims, by the failure of His efforts, by the constant temptation to sin?

There is no irreverence in the question, because it is one which God Himself has answered for us. It is like the petition of Philip, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." And the answer which comes is the answer which Philip received: "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. If ye had known Me, ye

should have known My Father also." For there is another half to my text—a half upon which I have not yet touched: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Here is the key to the difficulty which we all must feel more or less when we speak of knowing God. For us men in this human life the knowledge of the Father is the knowledge of the Son, the knowledge of God is the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We have before us in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ the satisfaction of this need of a divinity which is, if not nearer at least more apparent to our human life, and more possible for mortal men to approach.

We have before us in the Gospels the picture of God clothed with humanity—treading the streets of an earthly city, living that very life of struggle which seems at first sight to be at the very opposite pole of existence from God. Again and again, through the prison bars of that humanity, there flashed forth the light of the divinity that was in Him; but His life was a human life—a life like yours and mine; a life which felt pain and disappointment and temptation, and a life consequently which, though at far distance, it is possible for us to know and to imitate.

To know God is to know Him as manifested in the sphere of our humanity. To feel the power of that knowledge as a stimulating, no less than a transforming, force is to feel it as it shines through the pages of the Gospels,—Christ as He lived and Christ as He died; Christ living, Christ crucified, and Christ

risen is the power which draws all men unto Him. We can see and feel the infinite patience of Almighty God both in the world outside us and in human history. And as we see and feel this we are drawn towards it and transformed by it.

But in this human life—surrounded as we are by the irritating crowd of our fellow-men, harassed by the inevitable failure of our human efforts—that which stimulates us, that to which we can most immediately grow like, that which we can consciously imitate, is the patience, the longsuffering, the forbearance of Jesus Christ. We can see and feel the infinite mercy which is spread over all the world of God—the infinite goodness which in spite of all our sadnesses lies beneath our lives. And as we feel it we are drawn towards it, and the goodness of God is reflected as in a mirror in the glowing gratitude of our souls.

But nearer even than that abounding goodness is the tenderness, the sympathy, the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

This then is eternal life. It is the knowledge of God through Christ. It is that knowledge of God which is a transforming power. It is, on the other hand, that knowledge of Christ which is a stimulating as well as a transforming power. It is the growth within us, by virtue of that transformation, of a new man, a new self. It is the change from selfishness to unselfishness, from impatience to patience, from moral cowardice to moral courage, from distrustfulness to faith, from despondency to hope, from unreality to

truth, from uncharitableness to love of the brethren, from selfish inactivity to helpfulness for good. This is eternal life as we know it here, the life which the soul lives when it is close to God.

The effort after it is religion. There are many other things which might be said about a religion, and there are some other sides from which it may be viewed; but this is the essence and kernel of it: it is the conscious effort to know God by realizing in our lives the life of Christ.

And I lay stress upon this aspect of religion for two chief reasons:

I. Religion is sometimes preached as though it meant only the being saved from everlasting misery and the gaining of everlasting happiness. It is all that, but it is infinitely more than that. We must have come out of darkness before we can stand in the light. We must have been reconciled to God before we can begin to know the peace of God.

But religion means, eternal life means, not so much the having come out of darkness as standing in the light and feeling its power. It is not so much the ceasing to do evil as learning to do well. It is not so much the dying unto sin as the living unto righteousness. There are times at which the sense of sin must come upon all of us; but a religion which preaches only salvation is only half a religion, because it preaches only half the truth. It is not only half a religion, but it becomes a selfish religion; what it leads men to think of and to care for is neither God

nor Christ nor their fellow-men, but only that lowest of all motives for being good—the wish to go to heaven.

II. In the second place, the knowledge of God has sometimes been preached as though it were only a kind of dream.

There have been men in all ages of the Church's history, and there are men now, who think that the knowledge of God is best attained by contemplation. They fold their hands and gaze, as it were, upon an infinite sky, and are lost to the world in ecstasy.

There is at first sight a fascination in this shutting the eyes to all human sights and the ears to all human voices, and kneeling in the darkness and the silence alone with God. Even those who do not adopt the theory in its extreme form think highly of a devotional life. And there are moments when all of us do well to obey our Master's injunction—to go into the closet and shut the door and commune with Him who is invisible.

But the world in which our Lord ordinarily moved was the world in which you and I have to move—the world of business and of work; the world of common daily duty, of common household cares; the world of affection: and it is in this world that we must be like Him, and the struggle to be like Him is religion. Not once only, but again and again, is the knowledge of God and the knowledge of Christ spoken of as a practical thing and in a practical connection.

It is St. Paul who prays for his disciples that they

may bear fruit in every good work, and so increase in the knowledge of God.

It is St. Peter who couples grace and knowledge, bidding us "grow in *grace* and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

It is St. John who tells us, "Hereby do we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments;" "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked."

The one way to know God in this human life is to struggle to live in our homes, in our businesses, in our daily work, a Christlike life.

It is neither, on the one hand, to be always crying out to God to save and make us happy; nor, on the other hand, to be always straining our eyes in gazing at an infinite sky; but it is that harder and sterner and nearer task of following the blessed steps of Christ's most holy life.

And again the question comes, How are we to do this?

Again I can understand your asking me to go with you—one, as it were, to his farm, and another to his merchandise—and saying "Tell me how I am to be like Christ, *there*."

The answer is brief, for it can only be general: there are as many ways of knowing God and following Christ as there are individual souls. To each individual soul among us God stands in an immediate and personal relation. Each individual soul has not only a separate and incommunicable character, but also a separate and

inalienable way of knowing and acting. It would be as futile, as it would be interminable, a task to lay down rules for all this vast gathering,—for all these separate souls with their separate histories, their separate sadnesses, their separate capabilities, their separate temptations, and their separate sins. Nor is this what the Gospel does. It recognises and allows for this fact of our individuality. Other religions—and not only other religions, but narrow forms of Christianity—have had their elaborate rules for regulating almost every kind of action in almost every form of life; but what the Gospel gives us, and all that a preacher can rightly offer to Christian men, is not detailed rules, but general *principles*.

Instead of the minute regulations of the Mosaic law we have only, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

Instead of elaborate counsels of perfection we have only, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

And instead of two hundred pages on the imitation of Christ it repeats with emphasis the stern and solemn rule, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

There is the secret of the Christian life; there is the beginning of the knowledge of God; there is the earthly form of life eternal: "Let him deny himself;" and that is all the exhortation I can give you.

Out of self with its mean ambitions and its sordid

aims. Out of self with the sins that come of self-indulgence and self-contentedness and self-absorption.

Out of self with its jealousies and malices, its hatreds and mistrusts.

Out of self into the world of our fellow-men with their innumerable wants that cry for help, for those infinite sorrows that cry for compassionate love.

Out of self into the Divine world of sympathy, where, if anywhere in this life of sorrow, we have fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

Out of self until the old Adam has passed utterly away and the new man is fashioned in its place. The knowledge of Christ is so intimate, and the union with Christ so complete, that you say, It is no more I, but Christ who liveth in me.

This is for us the earthly form of the eternal life; this is for us the highest form of the knowledge which draws us to itself and changes and stimulates us.

It is not all that is possible to us. For here we know only in part; here we bear the image of the earthly; here we are living, as it were, under a vast tent roof and only see the sky through the rifts in the canvas; but the day is coming when the tent shall be struck and the eternity which is even now around us shall be manifest to our souls—the infinite sky of endless life, lit up even as the world is lit up now, to those who have eyes to see, by the sunshine of the love of God.

SERMON XVI.

LIFE'S TRADING.

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[*Burley, Leeds,* 1882.]

"Occupy till I come" [R.V. "Trade ye herewith till I come"].—LUKE xix. 13.

TO-NIGHT is the last night of the year. To-morrow will be New Year's Day, and it will seem as if a change had come. Somehow or other the world around us will look different, and we shall feel ourselves starting afresh.

And yet there will be no real change in the world around us. The difference between to-morrow and to-day will be only that inevitable difference which marks off one day from another. It will be only that same difference which made yesterday different from Friday, or last Monday from last Sunday, the slow and solemn movement of time itself with all the incidents and circumstances that time brings forth.

I remember that when I was a boy this was a great puzzle to me. I remember one New Year's night on which I went out into the fields, to watch what would happen. I thought that at least there would be a

lightning-flash, or some sudden turning of the moon, or just a moment's pause, as it were, in the movement of the stars. But though I watched and waited in a sort of dimly-felt awe—shuddering sometimes at the thought of what might happen—of thé possible manifestation, as it were, of the very finger of God, touching the vast machinery of the world, and bidding it stop for an instant, and then begin afresh, though it seemed almost as if the Almighty Father might choose that very moment for bidding the Archangel sound his trumpet, and for opening the awful heavens for the cloud-chariot of the Son of Man, there was nothing in the sky that there had not been before—no flash, no pause—no sound; until the music of the distant church-bells floated through the air to tell me that, all unawares and unperceived, the moment of change had passed, and that the new year had begun.

What then is a new year? Why should there be any more significance in to-morrow than there will be in to-morrow week? or in the first of January than there will be in the first of February? why should we single out one particular day and call it New Year's Day?

Now I think that I can perhaps answer this question best if I take for granted, as I have no doubt I may, that some of those who are listening to me are engaged in business, or at any rate know what business means.

You know, even better than I do, two facts about business: on the one hand, that if you spend your

whole day looking into your accounts, your business will not thrive; and, on the other hand, that if you never look into your accounts your business will *probably* get into confusion. And, consequently, I have no doubt that most of you who have to do with business, adopt the very simple and prudent plan of having regular times for taking stock and balancing your accounts. And when you have done so, you turn over a new leaf in your books, and, so to speak, begin afresh. There is nothing in the nature of things to compel you to fix on one day more than another for the purpose; but when you have fixed upon it, it becomes a sort of marked day, and you reckon up towards it and downwards from it.

Now in the parable from which my text is taken, the spiritual life is represented as a sort of business. The master gives his servants so many pounds—so much *capital* as we should say—and as he goes away into a far country, he tells them to *trade* with it. "Occupy"—*trade* with it; for that is the proper meaning of the word—"till I come" back. We are traders with the gifts that Christ has given us, and which He gives us afresh from day to day.

Now what is good for your worldly business is in this respect good also for this spiritual business in which we are traders for God.

It would be a great waste of time and a hindrance to your soul's growth, if you were always looking into your spiritual state, to see what progress you were making. There are some people, indeed, who do this.

At every moment, so to speak, on the road of life they turn round and apply the measuring-tape, and say with an inward satisfaction: "I am ten yards farther than I was a minute ago." You will see that progress under those conditions is not likely to be very rapid.

And on the other hand it would be dangerous in the extreme to go on from day to day, and from year to year, through all the days and years of life, without ever stopping for a moment to cast up accounts, as it were; to ask yourselves: "Am I doing what I ought to be doing?" "Am I as good a servant of Christ?" "Am I as useful to my family and to my fellow-men as I might be?"

There is, for all of us, whether we will or no, one such great day of account coming.

Some day, we cannot tell how soon, the Master who has given us the pound with which to trade will call His servants to Him one by one, that they may give an account. But "lest that day should come upon us unawares," unprepared to render any *good* account of what we have been doing, it is well for us—I do not say that it is our bounden duty, but it is well for us—to reckon with ourselves, to cast up our own accounts, and to see what we are doing with the talents which the Master has entrusted to us.

This is the meaning, and this is the use, of New Year's Day. It is a sort of spiritual account-day. Now before I ask you to go into the account, let me remind you what it is of which you have to give an account.

In a parable which is very much like that from

which my text is taken what are entrusted to us are called talents, and the parable has made such an impression upon the world, that the word has come into our common language—the language even of men who are not Christians. They speak of a man's talents, or of a talented man.

But this ordinary use of the word of the parable has led to a very common mistake about its meaning. It is sometimes thought that the parable refers only to those who have exceptional gifts of God—gifts altogether above the common; or only to some special power, which each one of us has in distinction from his fellows. And there are some persons who assume that the parable does not apply to them, because they think "I am not talented;" "I have no talents."

My friends, the parable applies to every living soul. The pound which God has given us is the sum total of His gifts to us. Whatever we have, whatever we are, whatever we have the power to do, whatever opportunities we have of doing it—these are God's gifts, the Master's pound, with which we have to trade, and for which we have to give an account.

There are powers and opportunities which are given to but few. There are two sets of gifts which we all have—will and influence. There are many people who are content to say that they are what God made them, that they have neither the wish nor the power to become different. Now it is only one half of the truth to say that we are what God made us, the other half is that we are what we have made ourselves.

We are all born into the world with a certain nature, with so many qualities of body and heart and mind, with so many tendencies to good and so many to evil; with a certain amount of strength, and a certain degree of weakness. If you take children quité early in life you will find one child for example to be impulsive, another affectionate, another quarrelsome; one will be industrious, another indolent. And you will find that many people grow up from childhood to manhood or womanhood, and from manhood to old age, taking these various tendencies and powers just as they found them, drifting helplessly along the current of their lives without ever attempting to turn or influence their course.

The very first lesson which every one of us ought to learn in the school of life is, that these natures which God has given us, and with which we were born, are simply the material upon which we have to work. They are so much wood and stone with which we have to build; they are so much raw yarn which we have to weave into cloth; they are so many talents with which we have to trade. For above all these tendencies and powers and qualities God has given to every one of us the supreme gift of WILL. He has given us the power to shape and mould the qualities with which we were born. He gives us every moment that we live some new circumstances, some new incident, some new opportunities, all of which are intended to be tools in the hands of our wills for shaping our characters. And above and beyond all this—stronger than

our wills, though working with them; infinitely stronger than our natures, although not crushing them, but acting upon them, as the gentle force of the sunlight acts upon the leaves of a flower—is His own Spirit, God Himself, working with our spirits, guiding, comforting, strengthening: guiding us when in the tangled maze of good and evil, we hardly know which way to turn; comforting us when in sorrow for our inevitable falls we are tempted to despair; strengthening us when with resolute effort and earnest prayer we determine to be better men.

Now, brethren, at the year's end, at this settling-day after fifty-two weeks of powers and opportunities for trading with this talent of will which God has given you for making your characters better than they were a year ago, let me ask you to go into the account.

Compare yourselves with what you were a year ago, and ask yourselves: "Is it loss or gain? Am I better or worse—more like Christ, or more unlike Him—nearer to God or farther away from Him?"

You must go into that account yourselves. We cannot in spiritual things, any more than in temporal things, keep one another's books. The gifts which God has given to us are infinitely varied. And a preacher can do very little towards helping his hearers to cast up the account.

I will take only one item: Every one of us has the gift of the power of self-control, the power to check ourselves. We all have in the nature with which we were born, passions and impulses and

desires which, when allowed to run an unhindered course, become aggravated and mischievous sins. But the Master puts into our hands the reins to check these fiery steeds of passion, and these reckless wheels of impulse and desire. You can if you will, you can if you pray, be master of them. You can stop anger, you can stop immoderate appetite and unlawful desires. You may have the kind of struggle with all these that you have with a restive horse, but you can stop them if you *will*, and if you pray.

Now, brethren, in reckoning up the account at the end of the year see how you have used this power of self-control. Look back on the last twelve months —think as well as you can of their varied and incessant incidents, and then ask yourselves, "Have I been trading with this gift of God to the best advantage? Have I been trying to keep down the old tendency to be angry, in season and out of season—the tendency to desire what I ought not to desire—to hate what I ought not to hate and love what I ought not to love?"

Then again, God has given to every one of us the gift or talent of influence. There is not one single person here—not the youngest child, not the poorest and humblest workwoman—who has not an influence upon others. That is a pound which God has given to every human soul with which to trade. Trade with that pound, says our Lord, to every one of us—"till I come." Use it to make other men and women and children better and happier.

My friends, look back upon the last fifty-two weeks,

and ask yourselves how this great amount of influence stands. What kind of influence have you, each one of you—not your neighbours, but *you* to whom I am speaking—been shedding around you this last year? And when you look into the account remember what a mysterious and subtle thing influence is. It does not consist in *talking* to people, in preaching sermons to them, or arguing with them.

Influence is not spoken but felt. It is like the sunlight—it acts without making any noise. Silently, and with unseen step, it draws out the bud into the blossom and the blossom into the fruit. It acts, so to speak, in spite of itself—doing the work which God has assigned it, whether it will or no.

Thus it is with this gift of influence: we *cannot help* influencing other people—we do it in spite of ourselves. The very love of our voices, the very manner of our setting about our work, must influence those with whom we are thrown. The sister will influence the brother, the brother the sister; the father influences the child and the child the father; friend influences friend, workman influences workman—and all by virtue of this silent power which passes like an invisible electric current from soul to soul.

So that when you reckon up your account of influence for the past year it will not be enough to say, for instance, that you tried to convert a drunkard, or to reform a liar. You must go a great deal deeper than that—you must ask how far your unselfishness helped to make others unselfish, your courage helped

to make others brave, your kindliness helped to make others warm-hearted. Or it may be—alas! too often it is: "How far has my selfishness helped to make others selfish—my moral cowardice to make others hang back from duty—my uncharitableness helped to make others hard and unpitying and censorious?"

Ah! my friends, when once we begin to reckon in this way the account swells to terrible dimensions. There is an awful balance on the wrong side when we add up just one single year—nay, one single week—of lost opportunities and misused power.

And the first thought of all of us as we look back must be a thought of sorrow, and a prayer that God will forgive us.

> O call me not to strict account
> How I have livèd here;
> For then I know right well, O Lord,
> Most vile shall I appear.

But although, just for a moment, in this halt, as it were, on the road of life, we may both feel our sorrow and express it, I do not ask you to prolong that feeling. When you have taken a wrong turn in a country walk it is folly to stand still for an hour or two, and reproach yourself with your mistake; the wisest plan is to turn round as quickly as you can and get into the right road. And when in business you find that you have run into debt, it is folly to wring your hands and sit down and deplore your mistakes. The wisest plan is to set to work to make up as far as you can for the loss, and to try to be more cautious in the future. It is

exactly so with this pound—these talents—with which our Master has bidden us trade. If we find on reckoning up the account at the year's end that we have, so to speak, run into debt; if we have misused our talents or not used them at all, what God would have us do is, not spend our time in sorrowing over the past, but endeavour with His help to make better use of them in the future. It is possible to say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," a great deal too often. Mercy and pardon are sure to those who believe, to those whom Christ has redeemed. The prayer which should never be absent from a Christian's lips is: "Lord, help me!"

And what I chiefly want to urge upon you to-night is, to reckon not so much with the past as with the future. Just for once look back upon all that you have done and left undone—upon the use you have made in this last year of the powers and opportunities which have been given to you. But when you have done that remember that, with to-morrow morning a new year begins—fifty-two more weeks of opportunities of trading with the Master's money. And all through those weeks, and days, and hours the Master's pound will be in your hands; and all the while, like a deep undertone beneath all the varied music of the incidents of life, there will be, if you are wise, these solemn words ringing out clear and loud: "Occupy till I come."

"Occupy till I come." *Occupy*—trade with use to the best advantage—the Lord's money. You have, every one of you, many gifts of God: you have industry,

or patience, or perseverance, or faith, or kindness of manner, or power of sympathy, or courage, or hopefulness, or moderation, or several of these gifts combined. These are your Lord's coins; trade with them, put them out to the best advantage among your families, or your friends, or the world which sees you but does not know you. Make them double this time next year what they are now in their strength and force in your own souls, make them more than double this time next year what they are now in their prevalence among your neighbours.

"Occupy till I come"—TILL I COME. The words give an awful responsibility to our trading. For He *will* come; and none of us know how soon. And although it is not good for our soul's health to be constantly thinking of the end, to make life with all its infinite possibilities of doing positive work for God, a mere anticipation of death: yet, at these solemn milestones of life—at the casting-up of our accounts—at the old year's ending and the new year's beginning, it is not only good for us, but almost a duty, to reflect before the awful significance of these simple words: "*Till I come.*"

It is not necessary for us to believe that before next year's December ends the "trump of God" will have audibly sounded, the riven skies parted, the sea have given up her dead. For you and me the account will be closed whenever the hour comes which calls us away from the body.

My friends, who among us would have the awful

hardihood to say that that hour will not come for us this year? Who among us would venture so to challenge God, as to say: "I shall be in this church at next year's end?"

Think of those of this very congregation who once spent their Christmas as you have just spent it, and who doubtless thought as much of spending New Year's Day as you think of spending to-morrow, to whom one morning, as they sat in their accustomed place of work, the sudden summons came—and in a moment the account was closed, and life had become eternity. Yours and mine may be less sudden deaths, to you and me a longer working time may be given. But while we live there is upon us this awful responsibility of duty. In our hands, in the hands of the very humblest among us, are untold powers and innumerable opportunities of using those powers, coins with which our Master has entrusted us, with this solemn command: "Occupy till I come!"

To the very best and strongest among us, this night of reckoning must be a night of sadness when we think of all we have not done in the year that is past. To the very weakest and worst among us to-morrow morning may be a morning of hope, if, as we go forth to the New Year's work, with our Master's money in our hand, we go forth in the strength of the Lord God.

SERMON XVII.

HUMILITY IN THEOLOGY.

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[*University of Oxford*, 1883.]

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."—PHIL. ii. 4.

IN the scheme for realizing the ideal Christian life which was framed by St. Benedict of Monte Cassino, and which became a rule for his followers in the monasteries of the West, the virtue of humility was made the basis upon which the Christian character should be built. It had twelve forms or grades, some of them touching the holiest relations of the soul to God, and others forming mere rules of Christian etiquette for the cloister, but all of them falling within the sphere of conduct.

But the "last of the Western Fathers," St. Bernard of Clairvaux, in commenting six centuries afterwards upon this part of the Bendictinė rule, sets aside almost altogether the forms which humility assumes within the sphere of conduct, and deals with it as a virtue of the intellect. Its end, he says, is the ascertainment of truth, and, viewed in the light of that end, St. Benedict's grades of it are like the steps by which the

pilgrims of ancient Israel ascended the hill of Sion, which he seems to have pictured to himself as the early painters represented it,—as a mediæval fortress, from whose lofty towers, overlooking the whole landscape of existence, all truth might be seen.

I shall not, therefore, be wanting in a precedent if, on the present occasion, on which humility is the appointed subject of discourse, I speak of it in its relation to knowledge.

But St. Bernard's treatment of it affords not only a precedent, but an analogy. For he lived in the first half of the twelfth century. A new life had then begun for feudal Europe. The schools of Paris were drawing thousands of students from far-off countries. The world of speculative knowledge was opening out afresh with infinite promise. The great Breton, Roscelin, and the great Lombard, St. Anselm, had fought the combat which had stirred the chivalry of thought to an apparently perpetual tournament. The most brilliant and the most hopeless of philosophical compromises, the conceptualism of Abelard, was fascinating the world which it failed to convert. Learning, like speculation, was passing through the throes of a new birth. The knowledge of classical literature was being revived. There was floating into Western Christendom, in the tales of travellers, the news that the "great master of all who know" had written other books besides the Organon. From the Jews and Moors of Moslem Spain, from the schools of Cordova and Seville, medicine and natural history, mathematics and astro-

nomy, were travelling slowly to the north. And for some, as for St. Bernard himself, the poetry of life had a greater charm than either logic or learning; and in him and his friends, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, the Eastern mystics lived again.

We, in our time, are in the midst, or it may be only at the beginning, of a still greater revival of learning, and a still greater movement of thought. The fields which but a century ago were mere tracts of barren moorland are now ripe with the harvest of knowledge. The history of our race, the history of the earth on which our race has lived, the history of the vast system in which this earth is but an insignificant unit, are beginning to stand out in clear outline from the mists which have hitherto hung around them. The study of language has taken us back to the times when there were no records. The study of mythology has enabled us to reconstruct that which is obscure even when records are abundant—the history of beliefs. The great methods of experiment and comparison have unfolded to our certain gaze more than our forefathers dreamed of as possible to be known. The sea has yielded up her secrets. The heavens themselves have told us of the nature of the fires which burn in their incalculably distant suns. The tree of knowledge is covered everywhere with new blossom. Encyclopædias have to be written afresh; and we feel the pride of conquerors who have brought a new empire beneath their sway.

But to anyone who looks as it were from an adjacent

cliff upon this great moving sea of contemporary thought, there are at least two facts which will suggest themselves.

I. In the first place, it will be apparent that this enormous growth in knowledge has opened up more questions than it has solved, and that, coincident with the unveiling of that which we now know, there has been a revelation of the vastness of the unknown. There was a time when the sum of the knowable appeared to be a limited quantity. The *totum scibile* was a country which could be mapped out and described. But the higher we ascend the hill of knowledge, the wider is the horizon. In the physical world, the knowable appears to be limited only by our means of observation. Around us is that which seems to be infinitely vast; beneath us is that which seems to be infinitesimally small. There are worlds beyond worlds, and worlds within worlds, still to be discovered, as our senses develop a finer quality and science finds for itself new apparatus of research. Even within the fields which have been most thoroughly explored, there are wide gaps in the record of facts, and negative instances to the generalizations which claim for themselves the most universal validity. And so far from the exacter knowledge of the physical world having helped us to a knowledge of the deeper problems which underlie and transcend it, it has rendered them more difficult, because it has rendered them more complex. From the search for the reality which is hidden behind phenomena, the enquirer returns more baffled and

unsatisfied than before; and, for all its splendid conquests, the best knowledge of our time confesses its incompleteness no less in the pathos of its triumphs than in the sublimity of its despair.

II. The second consideration which impresses an outside observer of our time is the existence of wide differences of mental attitude towards the world, alike of matter and of thought. Now, no less than at any previous time, and in some respects more than at any previous time, men are divided between pessimistic and optimistic theories of society, between nominalism and realism in metaphysics, between selfish and unselfish theories of morals. Now, no less than at any previous time, is the constructive type of character at work, drawing generalizations and framing systems. Now, no less than at any previous time, is the analytical type of character busy with its mental disintegration of phenomena, noting differences and marking discords. Now, not less than ever, does the spirit of dogmatism claim for its theories not only truth but exclusive truth, and set itself, as it were, in battle array to combat its gainsayers. Now, not less than ever, is there that natural rebound from dogmatism which showed itself in the academics and sceptics of later Greek philosophy, and which would have us believe that nothing can ever be certainly known. Now, not less than ever, are there between these poles of dogmatism and denial eclectics of infinitely varying degrees. And now, not less than ever, is it seen that the differences between these various types of character are permanent and irreconcilable;

as though the Spirit of God, which breathes through the human soul, as through the pipes of a great organ, gave to each soul his distinct and separate note, which it is not given to us to change or blend.

It is the combination of these facts, the fact that we are in the eddies of a great movement—that what we do not know seems to be vastly greater than what we do know—and that our differences of mental attitude even in regard to what we do know are deep and apparently irreconcilable, which makes a place, and that a large place, in our modern life for the Christian virtue of humility. For humility points us at once to the vastness of the unknown, and to the necessary partiality of each individual's point of view. It recognizes at once the "idols of the tribe," and the "idols of the cave." It bids us moderate our claims. It tells us that our generalizations are too wide. It looks forward to the innumerable years that are yet to come—to the infinite future which is to crown a possibly infinite past, and it will not assert that, either individually or collectively, we in this present year have attained to finality in any one branch of knowledge. It looks out upon the diverse characters of men, and will not believe that the conceptions of any one man or any one group of men are complete, and that their statements exhaust all possible assertions upon any one field of knowledge. It is an attitude of mind, which is what courtesy is as an attitude of conduct. It asserts the place of the individual, but it recognizes also the place, and the equal place, of others. It does not hold that because each

man's view is partial, conditioned and supplemented by the views of other men, there is no such thing as absolute truth. It looks upon truth—the sum of knowledge about the realities of things—as a diamond with many facets. Each man sees but one or a few of them; but those which he does see are there. They do not exist any the less truly because there are other facets invisible to him which are seen by other men. And, consequently, it is not the part of humility to be diffident about the truth which it sees. It is confident in assertion and diffident only in denial. It consequently becomes a stimulus and a spur. For acquiescence in what we at present see, knowing that what we see is partial and incomplete, is not humility, but a low form of pride—the pride of conscious ignorance.

And if humility be a becoming attitude of mind in relation to knowledge in general, it is especially so in relation to that knowledge which has for almost all of us an interest, and for some of us a fascination—the knowledge which is summed up in the word theology.

For theology, in some degree—though to a less degree than might have been supposed—shares in the general movement which marks the knowledge of our time. But the two points which are noteworthy, in regard to knowledge in general, are especially noteworthy in regard to theology.

I. In the first place, we cannot help being struck with the incompleteness of our knowledge of the sources of information.

If we take that which is incalculably the most

important of all such sources—the New Testament—we are not at the end, but only at the beginning of our knowledge of its *text*, because although the manuscripts have been collected they have not yet been sifted; and the very principles upon which they should be sifted have not yet been determined.

We are not at the end, but only at the beginning, of our knowledge of the meaning of that text, because the facts of contemporary language have not yet even been gathered together.

We are not at the end, but only at the beginning, of our knowledge of the ideas to which the Divine words were relative, and by which their textual meaning must necessarily be explained. And we are not at the end, but only at the beginning, of our knowledge of those facts of the history of Christianity, during the first centuries of its existence, which have determined the history both of its doctrines and its organization ever since. And if we cast our eyes upon a wider field, we are not at the end, but only, as it were, at the beginning, of our knowledge of the facts of other forms of religious belief, which existed before God revealed Himself to men in the person of Jesus Christ, and which have existed since, and which brings us face to face with that larger and momentous question: Who are the "other sheep" of the Good Shepherd "which are not of this fold"?

II. And not only in theology, as in other fields of knowledge, do we find ourselves face to face with unexplored facts, and unsolved questions, but in theology,

as in other fields of knowledge, the inferences from the facts we know are as various as are the various types of human character. Ever since our Lord's earthly lifetime, the facts of His life, and the words of His teaching, have roused the activity of many types of mind, and given birth to many kinds of knowledge. Without pressing, as some have pressed, the differences in apostolic days between St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, or without saying there is not a substantial agreement between them on certain fundamental propositions, it is impossible to deny that those several Apostles represent distinct attitudes of mind. And through all the centuries of Christian history, those distinct attitudes of mind have continued and multiplied. There has been the theology of the logician —drawing the pure gold out into fine threads, and weaving them into such exquisite filigree-work, that the sense of the purity of the material has become lost in the sense of the ingenuity of the workmanship. There has been the theology of the critic, scanning the evidence for each fact with cautious eye, and examining, as it were, with a microscope, the letters of the Book of Life. There has been the theology of the mystic, with his eyes aflame, as the awful glory of the spiritual world has blazed and burned before his sight. There has been the theology of the syncretist, claiming to be free from the narrowness of a single view, and to be able to make Divine truth into a mosaic—the tesselated pavement of his judgment hall. There is the theology of those, who, believing that the Church is in some

mysterious sense the continuation of the Incarnation, —the very Body of Christ incorporate in living men,— believe also that through the ministers of the Church, and through them only, as through the bodily organs, the sustenance of the Divine life is given. There is the theology of those who believe that faith, and faith alone, binds the individual soul to its risen Lord, and makes the body of the believer the temple of the Holy Ghost. There is the theology of those who believe that the order of nature, and the order of grace, are one and the same. There are inside all these several schools those who claim for their doctrines, not only truth, but exclusive truth; and there are outside all these schools, those who maintain that all truth about God is a mere "will-o'-the-wisp"—the phosphorescence on the stagnant marshes of old beliefs.

And that which is even more noteworthy than the fact of differences of opinion on all these points, is the fact that the differences are apparently irreconcilable. They are not like differences as to some matter of fact, which can be settled at once by reference to a common standard. They lie deep in the very constitution of men's natures. The whole bent and texture of some men's minds is to be critical, of others to be sympathetic, of others to be doubtful. Men can no more change their natures in this respect than they can change the cast of their features. Nor can any one man say without arrogance, Mine, and mine alone, is the true attitude. The character, the tendencies, the attitudes, of men's minds are as far apart, and as little likely to

be brought together upon the inferences which may be drawn from the facts of Christian theology, as are the separate snow-peaks which rise up in a great Alpine chain; between them are chasms which cannot be bridged: and above them all is the infinite blue heaven, with its faint white mists of unsolved questions, which no controversies touch,—the mystery of birth, and the mystery of death, and the mystery of pain.

It is in face of this combination of the facts of theology, the fact of a great present movement of religious thought, the fact of the largeness of the field which has yet to be explored, and the fact of the deep and apparently irreconcilable differences of mental attitude towards them, that, as in face of a similar combination in the sphere of general knowledge, there seems to be an especial room in the domain of theology for this Christian virtue of humility. For humility is an attitude of mind which, looking at something vaster than ourselves, recognizes our personal littleness. It acknowledges at once our imperfection and our differences. It points, on the one hand, to the smallness of what we know, and quotes to us the ancient words: "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of Him." It points us, on the other hand, to the inevitable imperfection of each individual soul, and tells us that no one man's mind is a perfect mirror of the mind of God. It is not dogmatism, for dogmatism maintains, not only, as humility maintains, the truth of its own assertions, but the falsehood of all others. It is not scepticism, for it sees in scepticism

only another form of dogmatism—the dogmatism of assumed ignorance. It is not compromise, for while it acknowledges that there may be truths which it does not itself see, it gives up no iota of its own conviction. Nor is it indifferentism; for it believes that God has revealed Himself to men, and that His revelation may be known; but it believes also that that revelation has been made πολυμερῶς as well as πολυτρόπως—in many parts as well as in many ways—and it only abstains from passing judgment on those parts which other men see rather than ourselves, or which have possibly not been yet revealed to any of us. It recognizes the distinction between fact and inference; between the facts of our Lord's life, and the recorded words of His teaching, and the inferences which may be derived from them. But though it makes this distinction, its creed is not in solution. It has its own strong convictions; but the very strength of its convictions makes it admit the co-existence, and the possible co-ordination as truth, of similar convictions in the minds of other men. It consequently declines to claim for itself infallibility. It asserts no monopoly of truth. Believing as it does that we are all sons of one Father, it cannot believe that to one son exclusively has the Father revealed His nature. And believing this, it is urged on by that irresistible impulse, which to most men becomes an inexorable duty, to endeavour to supplement its own imperfection. It becomes the law, not of standing still, but of progress. It treads a slow and cautious path, but, in treading it, it ascends. It is

sometimes enveloped in mist, and over the landscape on which it gazes there often broods the inexplicable darkness of the thundercloud; but out of the cloud there comes to it the echo of a Divine voice which becomes at once a consolation and a stimulus, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt understand hereafter."

This is the path of humility. This it is to look, as St. Paul bids us, not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. This is that *via media*, in which it is the especial duty of us to walk who claim to be loyal sons of the Church of England. For the Church of England, content with requiring from her members an adherence to that ancient baptismal formula which is known as the Apostles' Creed, does not claim for herself, and especially denies even to general councils, an immunity from error, even in things pertaining unto God. In her view, the function of a Church is not that of an interpreter of Holy Writ, but that of its witness and guardian. Her position is thus unique among the great churches of Christendom; and it is one which is especially incumbent upon us at the present time to maintain and to defend. For, in face of the diversities of opinion within our own borders, in face of the common differences of all of us from those who are outside our own organization, but to whom not even an Ultramontane would refuse the name of Christian; in face of the vast heathen world, with its religions which are not yet dead, and whose elements of truth the most

enthusiastic missionary cannot ignore; in face of the deeper questions to which the widening knowledge of our time is giving a new force and a new significance, it is well for us to consider how much of our failure of union and of evangelisation is due to the over-confidence with which we have mingled inference with fact in our statements of belief, and whether the path of humanity may not be destined to become the path at once of conquest and of peace. It is neither latitudinarianism nor compromise to say, that we Christian men do not claim to understand all mysteries and all knowledge; or to say that though truth is one it has different aspects, and finds various forms of expression. Nay, rather, as some of the schoolmen urged, this spirit of humanity is the foundation of all Christian virtues, and transmutes itself into them. It is the spirit of charity, because it is the spirit of catholicity, —the recognition in the sphere of the intellect of the brotherhood of the sons of God. It is the spirit of faith, because it believes that the key of the unknown is in the hand of God. It is the spirit of hope, because it believes in the dawning light. It is the path which you especially should tread, who stand as it were at the gateway of theological knowledge and desire to enter in. You will find it a path of difficulty and a path of courage. You will find ambitious systems, both of dogmatism and of doubt, ready to your hand. You will find eager partisans ready to give you hard names because you will not join their company. But you will find also that in treading this path of humility,

in limiting your statements to what you know, in sifting other men's statements before you adopt them, in continually going on with the search rather than in continually asserting that you have found, in looking also at "the things of others," in forbearance, and consideration, and the practical belief that the Divine Spirit breathes through other lips than your own, you will not only be doing your part as Christian men to win the world for Christ, and to bring about that spiritual unity for which He prayed, but you will learn also in your own secret souls that now, as in ancient days, and in the sphere of knowledge no less than in the sphere of conduct, the abode of God is with the humble.

SERMON XVIII.

THE AIM OF CRIMINAL LAW.

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[*University of Oxford*, 1884. *An Assize Sermon.*]

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."
—1 Cor. x. 24.

THERE was an ancient rivalry in this University between the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Medicine. The rivalry has ceased, but the analogy which it suggests remains: it is based upon so real a correspondence between the arts which the two faculties are designed to foster, as to have continued true in spite of many variations in both the circumstances of the times and the aims of the arts themselves.

The earliest aim of the art of medicine was to cure disease; and so long as disease exists the aim is legitimate and permanent. For a long time it was the only aim. Medicine meant therapeutics: it cultivated only the arts and sciences which are ancillary to therapeutics.

But as time went on there arose a second aim. It was discovered that diseases were not all scourges of God, but had their origin in ascertainable causes. The efforts of physicians were directed to find out these

causes, and as far as possible to remove them. They endeavoured not only to cure but to anticipate. Therapeutics gave way to preventive medicine; that is to say, the art of medicine came to have for its object, not so much to restore a sound state of body as to prevent a sound state of body from being impaired, and it dealt with the causes of disease, not only in the individual, but in the circumstances which chiefly arise when men are aggregated into societies.

The aim of criminal law, and it is of criminal law alone that I propose to speak to-day, has passed through a corresponding change. It was at first vindictive: it was the effort of society to control the instinct of revenge. As civilization progressed, it became remedial; it endeavoured not to punish but to cure. There were many variations in the methods which were employed: but they were all based on the hypothesis that crime was a social disease, and that as such it admits of remedies. The remedies employed in the first instance, like the remedies of the older therapeutics, dealt almost exclusively with the effects of crime in the individual, and provided for them. But in course of time the fact forced itself upon the attention of legislators that, in a large proportion of cases, crime, like disease, is the result not only of ascertainable causes, but of causes which affect not so much individuals detached from the mass as large groups of society at once. The aim of those who engaged themselves with criminal law began to be directed rather to the removal of these causes than to the obliteration of their

effects. The consideration of the best deterrents from crime came to give way to the consideration of the means by which the social conditions which foster crime may be best removed.

Now there are conceivable circumstances under which preventive medicine and preventive jurisprudence would be capable of being so cultivated and so applied as to be no less exact in their methods, and no less certain in their results, than the art of engineering or of building. If human bodies came into the world fresh from the hand of their Maker, unscarred by their fathers' sins, unbiassed by their fathers' tendencies, the city of Hygieia would be situated not, as now, in the far interior of the country of Utopia, but possibly here in England. And similarly, if human society were now first to be organized, if we were to begin step by step from the simple elements which philosophers have described as the conceivable beginnings of political organization, the office of the criminal judge might find no separate place, but be merged in the office of the educator and the moral guide.

But just as, on the one hand, the art of medicine, as it exists now, is complicated by the fact that human bodies are not what God made them, but what they have become through generation after generation of want and disease, of unhealthy homes and vitiated ways of living; so, on the other hand, criminal law is complicated by the fact that human society, whatever its origin, and whether its present state be an improvement or a degeneration, is not what it conceivably

might be, but what it has become through the combined and accumulating influence, from generation to generation, of lust and avarice, of passion and contention, of misery and war.

Hence, in law as in medicine, prophylactics cannot yet—nor within the limits of our present horizon—wholly take the place of therapeutics: cure and prevention must go hand in hand; we must be content to begin with reformation.

Criminal law has thus come to have a double aim, the one palliative, the other preventive. As far as the present is concerned it proposes to reclaim the criminal classes, as far as the future is concerned it proposes to prevent criminal classes from being formed. And this double aim has, though only after many struggles, so far asserted itself as to be recognized by the State and to underlie legislation. Even the earlier stages of that legislation are within the memory of many who are now living, and of some who may be present here. It was based upon the hypothesis that the forced seclusion of an offender might be made the means, not only of deterring him from crime, but also of accustoming him to habits of industry, and so enabling him to acquire for the future an honest livelihood. The State assumed to itself the especial charge of young offenders against social order, and endeavoured by weaning them in early life from mischievous associates, and by teaching them useful trades, to give them the opportunity of being for the rest of their lives respectable members of society. It was reserved for our generation to take

a farther step, by insisting on the education of every child who is born into it, with the explicit intention of thereby diminishing the number of the criminal classes. And it is even more recently that the State has recognized the fact that crime often goes hand in hand with squalor, and that it has afforded facilities for replacing the foul nests in which the night-birds of human society make their home by clean and healthy habitations.

It is the grateful task of this generation, and of that which is coming on, partly to carry out and partly to develop these measures of remedial and preventive legislation which our fathers and our contemporaries have devised. It is our task, for example, on the one hand, to see that prison administration be effective to secure its end; and, on the other hand, to develop the principle on which that administration is based by contriving better means than exist at present for enabling those who have passed through prison discipline to recover their lost places in the ranks of honest men, and to cease to be a leaven of vice in the society to which they are restored. It is our task, on the one hand, to see that children are sent to school; and, on the other hand, to take care that the education which they receive be not, as it has too often been, a mère gathering of dry faggots, but an eating of the genuine fruit of the tree of knowledge. It is our task, on the one hand, to see that sanitary legislation secures its immediate end; and, on the other hand, to take measures for obtaining that co-operation of

individuals without which the healthiest homes may become as useless as the worst. It is our task, on the one hand, to see that the facilities for intemperance are not multiplied, and that existing facilities are controlled; and, on the other hand, to see that means are provided for supplying the social want which has hitherto been met mainly by the tap-room and the gin palace, by providing other places of entertainment in which the passions of men will not be stimulated by noxious drinks.

But the task which lies before us and before our children does not end with the application, or even with the wider development, of those principles of remedial and preventive legislation which have already been accepted. When all is done that can be done in the way of reforming the criminal and educating the young, of making homes healthier, and removing some of the inducements to wrong-doing, there will still remain those factors which have been so long a part of human history as to seem permanent and ineradicable. The causes of crime do not lie wholly on the surface of society. They do not wholly consist in drunkenness and squalor and ignorance. They reach deeper down into the constitution of the body politic, and into the inner springs of action. And if crime is altogether to be prevented, if that millennium is to come in which the criminal judge will be known only from books of history, criminal law must be subserved not only by those acts which deal with the outward appearances of evil, but also by those sciences which are concerned

with the general conditions of human society, and with the ultimate motives of human conduct. The criminal jurisprudence of the future promises to widen out into what is now sometimes called social science—the consideration of all the laws which promote or retard the well-being of society. Just as a hundred years ago many of those principles which now underlie practical legislation were only hopes or theories which floated in the minds of thinkers, so there are many problems connected with the general improvement of social conditions, and thereby with the diminution of crime, which in generations not far removed from our own may pass from the region in which one man calls to another in a fog, into the clear light of practical legislation and administration.

In the meantime there are at least two things to be done.

In the first place, there is a special duty devolving upon some of us, particularly in this place, to grapple with the problems which preventive jurisprudence in its wider acceptation suggests, and to work out a practical solution of them. It is the duty of some of us to give the best thought and the ripest experience to the study of the great, and as yet unsettled questions of political economy, to the further elaboration of the theory of punishment, to the consideration of the best methods of education and of the relation of education to crime, to the reduction of the overwhelming numbers of the pauper class, and even to the examination of the political conditions under which there is the maximum

of happiness and the minimum of crime. For some of these are the questions of the future, and the success of the future in dealing with them will depend to no slight extent upon the degree to which we on our part have helped to clear the ground.

In the second place, there is a common duty devolving upon all of us to help forward the great work of preventive jurisprudence, by endeavouring to frame our own conduct after the ideal which it holds before us. If you and I, brethren, wish the world to be better, we must first be better ourselves. If you and I wish criminals to be fewer, and look, in either our day-dreams or our prayers, towards a state of things in which they will have ceased to be, we must make it the effort of our lives to be in our own persons men from whom the deep-reaching roots of crime have been plucked out, and who show in their demeanour towards their fellow-men what they would have their fellow-men to become. And hence it is that the consideration of preventive jurisprudence, of the means whereby the world may become better than it has been and than it is, so far from being foreign to this place in which we stand, claims especial recognition in it. For its aim is one with the aim of practical religion. It is identical with the ideal and the precept of St. Paul, "Let no man seek his own, but every one another's well-being." The duty which it involves rests upon the deepest foundations on which any obligation can be based. For the effort to be better in ourselves, and thereby to help in our own persons and by our own example

towards the regeneration of society and the coming of the kingdom of heaven for which we pray, is a duty which is incumbent upon us, not only as members of this great human community from which we have ourselves received so vast a legacy of civilized habits and transmitted knowledge, not only as members of this great country which, by whatever name it may be called, empire or kingdom or confederation of kingdoms, gives to each of us so vast a sphere of usefulness, and throws upon each of us so heavy a responsibility; not only as members of a great religious society in which more than even as men or as citizens we are members one of another,—but also in the depth of our own secret souls, in our individual relations to the Unseen and to the Future, as followers of Christ and as servants of God.

SERMON XIX.

THE EPIPHANY.

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[*Burley, Leeds*, 1884.]

"The life was the light of men."—JOHN i. 4.

THE Epiphany is the commemoration of the shining of a light. The word is not only poetical and metaphorical in itself, but it also comes to us from an age and a country in which poetry and metaphor played a more important part in life than now; it was consequently applied to many things to which it seems to us to bear only a remote and fanciful resemblance.

When the sunshine drove away the frosts of winter, and brought back the luxuriant verdure and the ripe fruits of summer, making the still glens resonant with the songs of birds and the wilderness blossom as the rose, light seemed to them the source and symbol of the life which it made possible.

When the sun rose above the eastern hills and the towers of the city walls, and the rocks of the deep ravines no longer stood indistinguishable in the darkness—when as man met man in the awakening streets he could discern not a mere moving shadow but the face of his brother or his friend—the light which came

upon them, and made all this possible, seemed the source and symbol of knowledge.

When the fresh glow of the morning absorbed the mists on the horizon, and chased the gathering clouds beyond the farthest verge of sight, and not a single snowflake of cloud flecked the intense clearness of the summer sky, and the sight almost dazed itself to blindness before the steady blaze of the perfect opal of the firmament,—the light of which all this was the visible shining was, to those who thought, the source and symbol of purity.

When in the fulness of the noonday the pinnacles of the House of God flashed back upon the face of heaven a brightness almost its own; when the hills stood radiant with their verdure, and the great white sea beyond them blazed like a jasper floor,—the light which caused all this, and which made the heart beat with an irrepressible exultation against the barred walls of its chamber, was the type and symbol of gladness.

When St. John, therefore, speaks of life being *light*, possibly both terms, and certainly one of them, conveyed to the minds of those whom he addressed many other meanings than those which are obvious to ourselves; and it has been the happy fate of many men to have had leisure to weave many webs of speculation by way of commentary upon these famous words. Some of them thought of the life of Christ as a living influence; some of them thought of it rather as a historical fact. To some of them the life of Christ was the light of men, because it quickened their dead souls with a new

power, and made them live again with the life of sons of God. To others it was the light of men, because it drove away the miasma of impurity and unholiness, and made the foul soul clean. To others it was the light of men, because it brought into their sad lives a new hope and a new possibility of joy.

I do not propose to-night to draw out all these and other meanings which are latent in the text, but to ask you to consider in detail only one; and that, perhaps, at once the most obvious of them all and the most full of practical power.

By the life of Christ I propose to consider the actual life which He lived, and of which we have the record in the Gospels. That life was the light of men, because it was itself a living revelation. The character which He exhibited, the words which He said, the actions which He performed, the spirit in which He did them—all this shone out ages ago; all this shines out clearer and brighter as the years roll on and the mists fade away, as the true light which lighteth every man; the true light which is to melt our benumbed and frozen souls; the true light which is to drive away the darkness of ignorance and dishonesty and impurity and selfishness, and to guide our feet into the kingdom of God.

The life of Christ was the revelation of God to men. The character which was manifested in the whole tenour of His actions was a withdrawing of the veil from what had been before only dimly seen, an exhibition of what God is, and of what it is to be Godlike. It

was through the medium of a man's nature that the Divine nature showed itself. It was in a man's life that God was pleased to show us what He Himself is, and what our lives may be. Our weakness was not mocked by the spectacle of a human body moved like a machine by the Divinity which tenanted it. The reasonable soul as well as the fleshly organism was human. Nor were our strivings after better things mocked by the spectacle of a life moving on a loftier stage than that which is possible to us. The life which He lived, as well as the character which He bore, was human—none the less human for its being also Divine. The sphere of its action was ordinary life—the ordinary life of men who, like you and me, have bread to earn and families to support; who have joys and sorrows, anxieties and cares, affections and responsibilities; and who believe that it would be a falling short of the purpose of our creation if we left all these things unheeded and undone.

This was the light of men. It was by a life spent in this sphere that He revealed to us the nature of God. And it is in this very point that the difference between "Christ and other masters" is most prominent. Both before and since philosophers have spun curious cobwebs of speculation as to the nature of the Most High. They have chiefly told us—and I do not say that they have told us wrongly—what He is *not*, that He cannot be seen, that He cannot be limited, that He cannot change. All this is true, but when all these attributes are put together there is still

only a formless and colourless picture. It is impossible to represent to ourselves a cluster of negations. Still less is it possible for us to take a cluster of negations as the type to which we are to shape our lives. But Christ showed us not so much what *He is not* as what He *is*. He showed it by exhibiting it in His own character. His life was the light of men.

Look for a moment or two at that life. It is impossible to say all that might be said about it in one sermon or in twenty sermons, but one or two features shine out even above the rest. St. John sums it up when he says that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. These two features, grace and truth—charity and sincerity—kindliness and honesty—are marked upon it in a marvellous degree. It was full of *grace*. It was a life of self-sacrifice. It was a completely unselfish life. It was wholly given up to doing the will of God and achieving the good of man. That which, under innumerable and sometimes hardly discernible forms, is the prime motion of action with other men was altogether absent from His nature. He identified Himself with the mass of men in such a way that their hopes, their aims, their joys, were His. He went out of His way to help them; He did good not merely when it required little effort, He *went* about to do it. His love embraced not only those with whom He might be supposed to have some common tie of kinship or of sympathy: it took in the outcast and the stranger, the Samaritan heretic and the woman who was a sinner. And yet with all this there was no

weak-hearted complacency with wrong-doing. He had no sympathy for a hypocrite, and His words assume an unwonted vehemence when He denounces those who cause the little ones to stumble in their path. It was full, not only of grace but of *truth*. He had nothing to conceal, and He concealed nothing. The intense reality of His character blazes out, so to speak, in every action that is recorded of Him. It struck even His enemies. "Master, we know that Thou art true," they said, when they came to entrap Him into an admission from which they knew that He would not shrink and by which they hoped to ruin Him. And being true it was fearless. He was utterly unafraid. He flinched from nothing. Wherever duty called He went. He was not, as so many of us are, continually on the watch for what people might say of Him. He preached the purest morality, and yet mingled with those who had the reputation of being the basest and the vilest of mankind. He was taunted with the angry scoff: "Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber;" and yet He went on His course undeterred. He had the perfect strength which comes from perfect purity. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet He knew no sin. The tempter thrust again and again, and even tried to smite Him with the sharp edge of the Word of God. Sometimes His faith was tried, sometimes His patience, sometimes His love; but His faith, His patience, and His love never once gave way. He was under self-control, He had the power to check desire. For thirty years He lived unknown in the

obscurity of a provincial village. He was master of Himself because He was completely dependent upon God. He could bide His Father's time. He could wait until His hour was come—until the opportunity for action was afforded Him.

This is the true Epiphany—the manifestation of God in human life, which now, as then, is the light of men. It bids us be pure, for God manifest in the flesh was pure; it bids us be true, for God is true; it bids us be patient, for God is patient; it bids us be kind, for God is kind; it bids us be just, for God is just; it bids us be holy, for God is holy.

And yet St. John tells us in the same breath that "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." There are deep caverns on the earth's surface which the sunshine has never penetrated: and ever since the world began ignorance and superstition and hypocrisy have been busy at work, digging still deeper caverns for the souls of men. There are some men, and it may be some men here, to whom God and Christ are simply names and shadows; there are some to whom they are simply idols dimly seen through the stifling smoke of the incense of their worshippers; there are some to whom they are only puzzles and problems, the text of many commentaries, the centre of innumerable speculations. And all the time above and beyond the darkness which we are creating for ourselves there is shining out clear and glorious as a summer sun the true light which lighteth every man, the light of the life which was lived for

our example—the light of the true Divinity in man, the light of the life of Christ.

My friends, you will not have been to church in vain to-day if only you carry home with you this great truth, which most of you doubtless know already, but which you can never know too well—that for us men in our human lives and with our finite human understandings, God is what Christ by His life, as well as by His words, declared it to be; and that if you would understand the Father you must first understand the Son. To be like God we must be like Christ. The highest humanity is the highest Christianity. There are parts of the Divine nature which are altogether beyond our reach. It is impossible to be like God in His infinity, His omniscience, His eternity, but it is possible for us to be like Christ in His sincerity, His courage, His faith, His purity, and His love. And if only we will—if only we make the struggle which we may, to crush and keep down the lower and earthly part of us, the tendency to selfishness, to harshness, to unreality, to indolence, to distrust, the Christian life may be to us one long Epiphany, a continually brightening manifestation of God in our souls. If such an Epiphany have not begun for us already let it begin now; and let this year of grace be marked in the annals of our lives by the fact that in it we began to fix our eyes more and more upon the perfect life which our Master lived, and to shape our actions more and more after the perfect pattern which He revealed to men.

SERMON XX.

THE NEED OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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THE NEED OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

[*Westminster Abbey*, 1885].

"O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."—PSALM lxiii. 1.

THE scenery of many of the Psalms is the scenery of the far south of Palestine. I can only speak of it at second hand; but I have seen, as you, no doubt, have seen, from time to time, pictures of its mountain ranges and its deep ravines which almost startle us by the strange intensity of their colouring, and which yet, travellers tell us, are even less wonderful than the reality. There seems to be no beauty of hill and dale; no colouring of moorland or of glen in our northern lands, like the awful glory of those granite peaks, which glow in the sunlight until the eye is dazed by the splendour of their burning, and the blue heavens above seem to grow warm in sympathy. For a time the traveller journeys on, fascinated by the beauty of the scene. He finds here and there a well of water, and he replenishes his store; but then, again and again, there comes a long stretch of waterless waste, "a dry and weary land where no water is," and

he begins to feel the iron grasp of a want which he can neither repress nor satisfy. What thirst means in a tropical wilderness none but those who have passed through it can tell. It is an overpowering and a paralysing need.

All this the Psalmist had felt. He had wandered through those vast and gorgeous wildernesses; he had felt what thirst was; and when, in later days, he lay upon his bed, and meditated in the night watches, the memory of that weary wilderness and of the agony of his unconquerable thirst became to him a parable of life. As in the long marches through the desert sands, in the awful blaze of an Eastern noon, he had sighed for the pasture lands and the springs, so life seemed but a dry and weary waste until his soul was satisfied with the sight of God.

It is a parable of the life, not of the Psalmist only, but of the world; it is a picture of God's education of our race. Just as He did not teach our forefathers the arts of life—the use of iron and of fire—by an immediate inspiration, but let them find them out by slow and gradual processes, as the need of them was felt; just as He has not put intellectual truths into our minds at our birth, but lets us work them out as the satisfaction of a felt desire, so it is with *religion*. He does not all at once satisfy our mouth with good things. He teaches us through the discipline of thirst and want. He lets each age tread its own path, work out its own problems, cope with its own difficulties, and be brought to Him at last by the constraining force of an unsatisfied desire.

I might show that the parable is true of many ages, but I will take only two—the first ages of Christianity and our own. If we look at the first ages of our faith we see that it did not all at once convince men of its truth, as the sun that rises in the morning tells all who have eyes to see that a light is shining. Men came to it by many paths. The greatest of all those paths led them through the splendid scenery of Greek literature and Greek philosophy; for it was an age of culture: education was general in almost all the cities of the Roman Empire, and the basis of education for the mass of men was literature supplemented by the elements of philosophy. Men were as familiar with some of the technical terms of logic as they are now with some of the technical terms of chemistry or of physiology. To the better sort of men at the time philosophy was a passion; it absorbed all the other interests of life. They not only lived for their beliefs, but were sometimes ready to die for them. And they were beliefs for which a man might be content to die. From an intellectual point of view there is hardly anything grander, even in Christian theology, than the sermons of some of those philosophical divines who knew not Christ. The conceptions of an Architect of the universe who framed part to part with an exquisite symmetry; of a Providence who watches over all His creatures with an unresting care; of a supreme Dispenser of good and ill, of rewards and punishments, have never been more splendidly set forth or applied with greater force to human conduct. It was splendid scenery. I

should be the last to attempt to disparage the work which either literature or philosophy then actually accomplished, but neither literature nor philosophy was a substitute for religion. It failed, and that on so large a scale, and among so many types of character, that the experiment need never be tried again; there was the demonstration for all time that the soul had a thirst which philosophy could not satisfy; that thirst was the need of God, of a God whom men could love, of a God on whom they could lean, of a God to whom they could cry out in their despair, and their failure, and their sin: "My soul longeth for Thee." This need showed itself in a thousand forms, and some forms were very strange; but the stranger they were the more strongly did they express the need of the soul. The need was irrepressible, and it took whatever outlet it could find. Side by side with philosophy was superstition. There were fantastic forms of worship—new divinities, and new modes of approaching them. But all these were various expressions of one overpowering thirst; and in the discipline of God the thirst was for a long time unsatisfied. It was not until other waters had been found to be bitter that the masses of educated men came to drink of that living water which the Christian faith supplied—the water of the knowledge of God in Christ, which is, in the believer's soul, "a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

That was one fulfilment of the parable. It is being fulfilled again before our eyes in our own time; we, too, are passing through another kind of scenery, a

scenery so new and vast that we can hardly be surprised that many men, in their wonder at the newness and vastness of it all, have come to think that this at last is a satisfaction for the soul, and that in this crown of all the ages we have found in Nature a substitute for God. Alike from the far-off stars and from the depths of the deep seas, there shine out splendours upon splendours of new knowledge, and new possibilities of knowledge, which seem to lift us into a higher sphere of living than that which to our forefathers was possible. There are men in our own time to whom this new knowledge is all in all. The acquisition of it is the end, and I will not say that it is an unworthy end, for which they live. I should be the very last to disparage it. The opposition between it and religion seems to me to be a mere battle of phantom hosts in a phantom world; but I say that it is not enough. It is splendid scenery,—the world has never seen its like,—but, splendid as it is, there are needs, the deepest needs, of the soul which it does not, which it cannot, satisfy. I seem to see in the writings even of some of those for whom science has taken the throne of faith a profound sense of dissatisfaction, a restlessness, that comes of a sense of want; and I see, side by side with the enthusiasm of science, the enthusiasm of a hundred forms of religion. The sense of thirst is overpowering in our time; it cannot help but show itself. And now, as in old days, it sometimes takes strange forms. We may read with complacency—though the old phrases seem strange in their

new setting—the sermons which are preached in the church of humanity; we may listen with complacency—though the music may sound harsh to our ears—to the bands of the Salvation Army; we may hear—I will not say with complacency, but with delighted surprise—of the successes of Evangelical movements in France, in Italy, and in Spain, because to the interpretation of all these phenomena there seems but a single key: they all with their different voices tell the same story—the want of our time, the thirst of our time, is religion. Consciously or unconsciously in a thousand different ways, by a thousand different efforts, men in our time are thirsting for God. It is true that the want does not all at once leap forth into the articulate cry of the Psalmist, "My soul thirsteth for God," but there is no other explanation of the phenomena. The parable has one more fulfilment—the soul of this Nineteenth Century is athirst for God, "in a dry and weary land where no water is." It is athirst for God. There is no other satisfaction for its ambitions, its enthusiasms, its passionate strivings; there is no other cure for its sorrows and its sins; there is no other solution of its problems. But I lay stress upon this—that what it feels, consciously or unconsciously, is a thirst for God; what it needs is religion—religion, not knowledge; religion, not philanthropy; religion, which thirsts for God, which is satisfied with nothing less than Him, and which finds in Him at once a supreme satisfaction and a constraining motive.

And I lay stress upon this because there are some

substitutes for religion—some forms of religion, if you like to call them so, which seem to me to leave out that which is its most essential element. On the one hand, in the rebound from the extravagances which have sometimes marked religious teaching, there are those who substitute for the whole of religion those elements of it which consist in the higher moral virtues—the love of truth, the love of righteousness, the love of self-control. For these elements I have no word but one of praise. The stress which is laid upon them is supremely necessary; without them religion cannot exist: but yet they do not constitute religion; they want just that which is characteristic of religion, just that which supplies the motive, just that which compensates for failure—consciousness of the presence of God. For in time there comes to all men the sense of thirst for God. There are few who rise at all times, there are none who rise uniformly at all times, to the heroic height of doing good for goodness' sake, and of furthering justice for justice' sake. The baffled efforts of the struggle for righteousness, the defeats of truth, the relapse from self-control, make men weary before the day is spent; and across the evening of life, if not across its morning, there rises the sharp and sudden cry of thirst, a thirst which God alone can satisfy. And, on the other hand, in the rebound from the superabundant talk about religion which characterises our age, from the battles of the churches and the unsubstantial theories which claim the place of Divine verities, there are those who substitute for the whole

of religion that part of it which consists in active philanthropy. For this, again, I have no word but that of praise. Without this religion can hardly be said to exist, but it is not religion; for though religion must move about the world with the busy feet of an angel of benevolence, benevolence does not of itself satisfy the soul's thirst for God. The soul comes back hungry from its errands of mercy—it needs a diviner motive and a diviner satisfaction. The beginning of religion is neither the love of righteousness nor the practice of benevolence, but the thirst for God. Where that thirst exists there is religion; where that thirst is absent, there, in spite of all that a man may profess, religion is absent also.

I am speaking to those who believe that that thirst may be satisfied. I am not now speaking to those who have not yet come to believe in God, or who believe Him to be other than He is. I cannot think that there is anyone here who holds the darkest of all forms of atheism—the theory that the belief in God is a mere artificial anodyne to lull the otherwise intolerable pain of living. I cannot believe that there is anyone here who thinks that the Maker and Father of us all has condemned us to journey through the scenery of life with only Dead Sea waters for our thirst, and Dead Sea apples for our food. The thirst for God finds its satisfaction. The satisfaction is as real as the need, and He has placed it within our own power. To the simple-minded Psalmist, living as he did before the age of philosophy,—I had almost said before the age of

theology,—the satisfaction was to appear before the visible symbol of God's presence at Jerusalem. That, too, is part of the parable. It is true for all time. The soul's satisfaction is to realize the presence of God. The other name for it is faith. It is the seeing of Him who is invisible. But though I am speaking to those who believe that the thirst may be satisfied, I am speaking also perhaps to some who are thirsty nevertheless. My aim is to urge, is to make faith a reality, by turning it from the mere acquiescence in propositions which you hold to be true to the realisation of that most stupendous fact of all existence, the fact of the presence of God. What a transformation would there be of the lives of many of us if we did but realise that every single scene of their varied drama is acted out from first to last in the actual presence of God, of a God who made the world, and upholds it!—of a God who is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, and who, having been incarnate, knows our sorrows, our aspirations, our failures, and our thirst for Him! We cannot actually realize this presence until it comes to us, not as a picture on which we look, not as the gratification of an intellectual desire, but with the force of an overpowering motive. If we did but once realize that God is here, knowing the unuttered thoughts of our heart, the unuttered whispers of our desire; if we did but once realize that God is here in the world of natural phenomena (of which day by day we are learning more), behind the shining of the sun, and behind the blowing of the breeze; if we did but once realize that God is here

in the world of human society, knowing its needs, its failures, its ambitions, controlling its movement on a vaster scale than our mind can grasp; that God is here, that He has been here since the world began, that He will be here when this world and the fashion of it has passed away; that God is not only here in this world, visible and invisible, in which we live, but that in spheres of life unknown to us, in the life beyond the grave, He, the same God for whom we thirst, He, the same God who reveals Himself as he satisfaction of our need, He, the same God who reveals Himself in His Son, is eternally present; if we do but once realize this—the realization of it—the one, single, vivid realization of it—will be a permanent force of our lives; it will satisfy our thirst; it will be to us a perpetual inspiration; it will give us the strongest of all motives; it will give us the sublimest of all consolations; it will smooth the rough places of life, and light up its darkness, and soothe us until the time comes when He bids us lie down to rest, and we sleep with the quiet sleep of a little child, knowing that the waking hour will come, and that when we awake after His likeness, we shall be satisfied.

SERMON XXI.

INDIVIDUALISM AND ECCLESIASTICISM: THEIR COMMON PLACE IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

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[*University of Oxford*, 1885.]

"Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel [R.V. abound] to the edifying of the Church."—1 Cor. xiv. 12.

I HAVE chosen these words from the list of texts which are specially provided for this morning's sermon, because the exhortation which they convey seems to be singularly applicable to the times in which we live. The newly-formed community at Corinth, to which they were addressed, was distinguished from the other Christian communities of which a record has come down to us by an extraordinary exaltation of the spiritual life, and, at the same time, by the existence within it of sharply-defined religious parties.

There had come over it a great wave of spiritual force, surging in different currents through the souls of the new believers, and finding its expression sometimes in the power to heal the sick, sometimes in the power to preach, sometimes in that strange utterance of impassioned emotion which is called "speaking in a

tongue." A physiologist may explain it as an epidemic of frenzy; but St. Paul saw in it, and we also may see, a special energy of that Spirit who, like the wind that is His earthly image, does not breathe through all the ages and upon all souls alike with the steady force of a uniform current, but breathes upon some ages and upon some souls with the rush of a mighty tempest.

The community in which there was this singular manifestation of spiritual energy was broken up into parties: "Each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." I do not propose to ask you to follow me—though the path is not without interest—through the forest of theories which has grown up round this last phrase: it is enough for our present purpose to point out that the overflow of spiritual life was not inconsistent with large diversities of opinion; that some of those opinions diverged so far as to question even the fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. xv. 12); but that the exhortation is addressed to all alike, whether they were of Paul, or of Apollos, or of Cephas, or of Christ, —"Seek that ye may abound to the edifying of the Church."

These incidents of the community of Corinth are a parable of our own time. Behind these early Christian communities there burns a light which casts their shadow onward on to the vast screen of history, so that their incidents are constantly repeating themselves on a larger scale. Upon us, too, in our time, there has come the wave of a great spiritual force. In all com-

munities of those who bear the Christian name men are aglow with the fires of a new activity. There is a new growth of religious thought and religious literature, of spiritual fervour and devotional expression, of charitable activity and missionary zeal, which, if it be taken in the mass, finds no parallel in any bygone Christian century.

And with all this new outpouring of spiritual life, stimulated into new energy by the new forces which act upon them, strengthened for contest by the new materials which are furnished by wider knowledge and keener insight, there are "divisions" among us, as there were "divisions" at Corinth—divisions so manifold as to seem at first sight incapable of classification, but which yet, if we overlook minor differences, conventional and accidental arrangements, may be ultimately merged in two great groups, according as they are dominated by the tendency to individualism, or by the tendency to which we may give the name of "ecclesiasticism."

The former of these has received an exceptional impetus from the forces of modern life. There has come a sense of power, and with the sense of power has come the instinct to use it. The spirit of our time moves as a giant moves who feels his strength and must needs give his muscles play. There has come thereby a quickened sense of personality; and with the quickened sense of personality has come an unpruned luxuriance of new theories, an almost wilful shaking off of old authorities, a construction of new

associations, an extravagant rebellion against customary rules. The spirits of men are stirred not by the memory of a splendid past, but by a sense of exultation in the moving present; and the traditions of a saintly ancestry are of less force than the sense of oneness with the general movement of our time.

And over against all this, stimulated on its part also into a new activity by the action upon it of influences which are alien to it, are the new forms of that which is at once one of the noblest growths of history and one of its strongest forces—the spirit of ecclesiasticism. It is at every point the antithesis of the other. It differs in its conceptions, for it conceives not of the society as an aggregation of individuals, but of individuals as members of the society. It differs in its methods, for it does not discover, but defines; it does not learn, but teaches. It differs in its aims, for it aims less at the perfection of the individual than at the realization of the society. The society is for it a Divine and organic unity, a perpetuated incarnation of the Son of God. Through it and through it alone, do the covenanted gifts and graces of God come to the individual soul. To be a member of it is the highest earthly privilege; to listen to the voice of it is to listen to a continuous revelation; to carry out the laws of it is to be free with a Divine freedom.

I need not speak at greater length of these two tendencies in themselves, because we all drift with the one or the other of them. I wish rather to ask you to look at two facts in relation to each of them, the

existence of which cannot be denied or the importance over-estimated.

The one is the fact that each of these tendencies carries with it the whole nature of those whom it affects. It is not a partial and passing phase of mind. It sways the whole being of a man in such a way that no other attitude of mind is conceivable to him. It is all but impossible for one who feels himself moving with the movement of his time; to whom it is an axiom that truth is discoverable by research; to whose spiritual nature the fact which dwarfs and overwhelms every other fact is the fact that God is close to him, in an immediate relation to him, speaking to him with an almost articulate voice; to throw himself, even in imagination, into the frame of mind of one who feels himself to be an integral part of a great society, to whom the grace of God comes through the society, to whom the traditions and forms of the society are the most sacred of possessions. And conversely: If you listen to the average adherent of individualism, you will be told that ecclesiasticism is so clearly wrong as to be only explicable on the hypothesis either of deliberate fraud or of judicial blindness; if you listen to the average adherent of ecclesiasticism, you will be told that freedom of research and freedom of association are patent absurdities, so clearly contrary to the mind of Christ as to be hardly worth discussion. This fact, that each is inconceivable to the other, seems to me to be of importance as establishing the inference that the difference is not a difference which can be composed

by argument or concession, but is a difference of mental type.

The other fact which has to be noted in regard to these two tendencies is, that they not only possess the whole nature, but also affect large masses of men. They are not the eccentricities of isolated individuals or of small groups. They cannot be accounted for by local and temporary causes. They form notable features of society. Nor can they be classed among those transient forms of opinion which sometimes, like a great snowdrift, hide for a time all the other features of a landscape, and then suddenly disappear. They are not only large, but constant elements in our present human life.

The existence of these two facts in relation to these two great co-existing tendencies may indeed be said to underlie and to account for no small part of the history of Europe for the last four centuries.

It has been an inevitable result of the fact of the completeness with which these tendencies lay hold of a man, that the one of them should have been constantly endeavouring to repress the other. Religion—and that not religion in general, but religion in the particular form in which man held it—has seemed not only so overwhelmingly true, but also so overwhelmingly important that it became a man's supreme duty to impress it upon his fellows, and to impress it, if persuasion failed, by physical force. It seemed as much a man's duty to save his fellow from spiritual perdition as it was to hold back a would-be suicide from drowning. It

followed as a necessary consequence that it was the duty of the State to help to keep its members from the contagion of pernicious beliefs. It is in this way that persecution has arisen. In one sense, no doubt, persecution is the worst outcome of spiritual pride. I am not offering an apology for it. I yield to none in my abhorrence of even the present attenuated forms of it. But, on the other hand, I cannot believe that all persecutors are monsters of iniquity. There have been among them men of refinement, of intelligence, and even of humanity. The fact that persecution and persecutors have existed, and have, indeed, not yet entirely passed into the world of shadows, seems to me to be simply a result of the fact that religion is not only a dominant, but also an all-absorbing, force.

But this fact, and all to which it leads, has been neutralized by the other fact that each of these tendencies is shared by large masses of men. Neither the one tendency nor the other has been able to assert for itself an unchallenged supremacy. Each has existed on so large a scale that the one has held the other in check, and there has resulted that equilibrium of forces for which toleration is an inadequate name—inadequate because it assumes a dominance of the one tendency over the other which may be true as expressing a political fact, but cannot, without begging the question, be held to indicate a normal relation.

We are thus brought face to face with two great tendencies which co-exist within the vast area of Christianity, each of which absorbs the whole nature;

each of which is shared by large masses of men ; each of which would, if it could, drive the other from the field ; each of which is held in check by the scale on which the other co-exists with it.

What is the relation of these facts to Christianity ?

The question is easy to ask, but the answer is difficult to find, partly because of the preliminary difficulty of determining the principle on which we should base it ; and partly because none of us, sharing as we all do in the one tendency or the other, can be held to be impartial judges. We cannot narrow the question to the form, Which of the two tendencies is true ? partly because that involves the assumption that only one of them is true, and partly because the difference of opinion as to the nature of the evidence which should be employed is part of the general difference between them. For example, Is it Scripture ? or is it tradition ? or is it both together ? If it be Scripture, what are the canons of interpretation ? If it be tradition, what are the exclusive channels ? If it be both, is it to be tradition modified by Scripture, or Scripture by tradition ?

Nor can we narrow the question to the form, Which of them is morally best ? because, even if the tests of moral excellence be agreed upon, there are upon the one side, no less than upon the other, men who are above the average and men who are below it. Neither tendency has a monopoly of either the genius or the folly of mankind. Whatever virtues of earnestness, of self-devotion, of spiritual-mindedness, are recorded

in the annals of the one tendency, are recorded also in the annals of the other. It is not possible to institute a comparison between them to the plain disadvantage of either. Each group has qualities which the other lacks, each lacks qualities which the other has, and, whether you take the individual or the mass, the scales of judgment seem to be evenly balanced.

If, therefore, we apply to the determination of the problem the criterion either of truth or of moral excellence, we shall simply leave off where we began, since each of the two tendencies will claim the victory for itself. We must, therefore, seek for another kind of solution, and it seems to me that such a solution is suggested by the very conditions of the problem itself. For, on the one hand, we have two co-existing tendencies, each of which, so far from merely lying on the surface of human nature, or being merely found in certain localities, is deep-seated, firmly planted, and widely spread. On the other hand, we have a religion which, not accidentally, but essentially, not in certain of its phases only, but in all of them, claims to be *universal.* The universality of Christianity seems to me to afford the key to the determination of its proper relations to the tendencies which exist within it. For it must be antecedently expected that Christianity, claiming as it does, and rightly claiming, to be the universal religion, cannot leave outside itself any large fact of human nature, or any great mass of men who are disposed to accept, and who do accept, the main truths which it proclaims. The universality which it

claims must fit the facts of the case : it must rest upon its power of comprehending various elements, upon its recognition of large diversities of type in human character, and upon its giving to each type its appropriate exercise. A religion which does less than this may indeed be, as Judaism was, Divine ; but it cannot be, as Christianity claims to be, the final revelation of the Father, who made all men of one blood, but mixed their elements in widely different proportions. But this which we must antecedently expect is what we find that Christianity actually does. Whether we take the earliest records of its history, or the earliest monuments of its teaching, we find that diversities of type and diversities of conception exist side by side. Its reasoning, as expressed in the logic of facts, is that diversities may co-exist. It does not come to us with a policy of toleration, telling the party which is from time to time dominant that it may condone this or that deviation. Still less does it come to us with a policy of compromise, bidding us gather fragments from this system and from that, and piece them together as well as we can into the mosaic of a creed. Its recognition of diversity is shown in the very form in which its first teaching has come down to us—St. Paul by the side of St. Peter, and St. John by the side of St. James. It not merely recognized diversities, but gave each type free play. Each type, obtaining its recognition and obtaining also its free exercise, was co-ordinated by one Spirit to one common end. And so it has been ever since. There has been room in it for different elements

and for different types of character, for emotion no less than for reason, for individualism no less than for ecclesiasticism. In the vast economy of God each element and each type has had some special function to perform. There is pride enough, no doubt, in each element and each type to make it think that it, and it only, represents the mind of Christ. But even the narrowest of creeds builds some bridge across the abyss of hell for all but the hardened impenitent. And if heaven be open to the one type no less than to the other there must be a common place for both of them in the Church on earth.

And so we come back to the words with which we started—to the exhortation of St. Paul to the Corinthians, who, though some were of Paul and some of Apollos, were all filled with various spiritual energies, and were all zealous of spiritual gifts: "*Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may abound to the edifying of the Church.*"

The words suit the needs of the vast Christian aggregate of modern times no less than those of the community to which they were first addressed. To those of us, on the one hand, who, though our lives be but "a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million suns," yet feel in personality an element of life which is at once like God and brings us close to Him; who believe that His grace comes to all who seek it, whether within or without the organized society, whether through or apart from the customary channel; who believe in the existence of a vast undiscovered

world of truth, spiritual no less than intellectual; and who believe, also, that any one of us may set sail upon the open sea in quest of it,—to such as these the exhortation, "Seek that ye may abound," sets the whole forces of our nature to seek whatever we can find.

To those of us, again, who conceive of the grace of God as coming only through the Christian society; who find in the food with which the society supplies them an adequate nutriment, intellectual no less than spiritual; who lean upon the vast fellowship of the present and the past, and seem to feel that without it Christianity would rest, as other religions rest, upon an unstable and shifting sand,—to such as these the exhortation, "Seek that ye may abound," comes, with no less a force than to others, to tell us that whatever be the mission which that society has to fulfil, we must do our best towards its fulfilment. Whether the inspiration comes to us from the sense that we are moving with the general swing and movement of our time, or from the sense that we are an integral part of a Divine and organic unity; whether we are stirred, in other words, by the forces of individualism or by the forces of ecclesiasticism,—the exhortation is to *abound*. And in the exhortation is an implied warning: it is a warning which appeals especially to you younger men, who see in all this constant conflict of religious opinion and religious systems a reason for standing apart, or for fighting at best a languid battle. The warning is, "Do nothing half-heartedly." It is of far less import-

ance which of the two great forces should move you, than that, if they move you at all, they should stimulate all your energies, and inspire your whole soul with the inspiration of a supreme necessity. You may think, and it is well that you should think, that there are other eyes than those with which you see, and other landscapes besides that upon which it is given to you to look; but it does not follow that your own eyes see with a distorted vision, or that the landscape upon which you seem to look is but the mirage in the desert. You cannot be half-hearted in religion. A half-hearted religion is but a ragged surplice huddled round the skeleton of unbelief. It is not merely that God will not take from you less than the love with which He bids you love Him—the love with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength—but that He has so framed the fabric of your nature that a half-hearted love of Him is impossible.

"Seek," then, "to abound" in whatever gift you have, on whichever side you stand. To some of you is given, as in ancient days, the spirit of knowledge—seek to abound in it, whether the knowledge be the interpretation of the past or the discoveries of the present; to some of you is given the spirit of wisdom—seek to abound in it, whether the wisdom be that which makes the utmost use of existing forms, or that which frames new forms for what seem to be new needs; to some of you is given, in larger measure than to others, the spirit of faith, the sense of the nearness to us of unseen verities; to some of you is

given, though perhaps in another sense than that of ancient days, the spirit of healing, the power to bind up the broken-hearted, and to touch those who walk lame along the paths of life with the magic wand of sympathy,—in all these, whatever they be, and on whichever side you stand, seek to abound—to leave the languid, easy-going ways of modern luxury, the cynical indifference which comes of doubt, and to be whatever you are with all the powers of your being.

But there is yet another element in the exhortation, and of it I must briefly speak. The words are not simply, "Seek that ye may abound," but "Seek that ye may abound to the edifying of the Church"—*πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας*; keeping in view, that is, the building up of the Christian community, the building up of the Holy Catholic Church, the building up of the regenerated and transformed society of the redeemed sons of God. It is at once a limitation and an aim. It is a limitation, because it suggests to us that our individual work is but part of a larger whole, and that men who are working at other kinds of work and by other methods than our own may yet be carrying out the Master-builder's plan. It is an aim, because it reminds us that all this overflow of spiritual energy is not a mere running to waste of waters, and that before us lies, with the certainty of Christianity itself, the realization of the sublime ideal which Christianity proposes to us. We too have a share in the last and greatest movement of our race. For the three elements of the social ideal which the philosophy of a century ago

evolved from a survey of natural relations, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," do indeed represent three stages in the onward progress of mankind. They each of them represent vast secular movements, which we cannot even detect until we survey history on the largest scale. The first of them is almost finished; the last is scarcely begun. The achievement of the political ideal, the ideal of liberty, belongs to the past. We read of the heroic struggles of our fathers to be free, of the lights and shadows of their varying successes, of imprisonment, of torture, of death, and of victory; and it sometimes seems as though there would have been an unwonted halo round our lives if we could have been fighting, as they fought, for the freedom which they ultimately won. What the political ideal was to them, the Christian ideal is to us. Before them was the ideal of liberty; before us is the ideal of fraternity. The one seemed for ages, as the other seems to many of us now to be but a fantastic mist in the Utopia which is peopled only with the ghosts of madmen's dreams. But for all that it was so far off then, liberty was realized at length; and for all that it is so far off now, fraternity will also be realized. But the one no less than the other has to be realized by ten thousand individual struggles, by sacrifices, by failures, by mistakes, by the long lapse of patient years. Its realization depends on the degree to which each of us in his appointed place does his appointed work, and does it, moreover, with the zeal, the energy, and the enthusiasm which St. Paul expresses by the word

"abound." And the nature of the ideal itself suggests to us another feature in the work which must achieve it. It is an ideal not of uniformity, but of brotherhood. It is a combination of different types into a single whole. We each of us in our pride act as though our own type, and our own type only, was destined ultimately to prevail. But the picture which the prophet of the future presents to us is the picture not of a world in which Ephraim and Judah will either of them have ceased to exist, but of a world in which Ephraim will no longer "vex" Judah, nor Judah Ephraim. It supposes not the extinction of the varieties of type which exist among Christian men, but their co-operation. It tells us not only that our "abounding" is not in vain, but also that, by our abounding in a common work in view of a common end, it is given to us, amid all the storms of the present, and in face of a doubting world, to realize in act, as well as in thought, that the earthly manifestation of the Fatherhood of God is the brotherhood of men.

SERMON XXII.

CHRISTIANITY IN ITS RELATIONS TO MODERN KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE.

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[*Preached before the University of Edinburgh, at its Annual Commemoration Service*, 1886.]

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." —1 JOHN v. 4.

THE circumstances under which we have met to-day preach of themselves an impressive sermon. The more I have thought of them the more ready have I been to be silent: and if for a few minutes I use the privilege of speech, I feel that I cannot better use it than in giving articulate expression to the hopes which those circumstances inspire.

I. The first circumstance is that a religious service has been newly instituted by a University which has added to the fame of its past the special fame of its present, that it is in sympathy with modern knowledge. I cannot but regard this as an indication, and a ground of hope, that the relations of religion to modern knowledge are beginning to be different from what they have been. It is impossible to look upon those relations without regret; for it is impossible to disguise

from ourselves that, for the most part, religion has not yet adequately appreciated the strength of the new forces which have sprung up around it. That which distinguishes our age is not simply that we know more than our fathers knew. Nor is it simply that we have passed from one phase of opinion into another. It is rather that we are face to face with a new world. We are passing through one of those crises which come only once and again in the long history of our race. We are on the threshold of a new era. We are entering into a new sphere of thought. We are no longer dominated by the same fundamental ideas as our fathers. We are assimilating wholly new conceptions. The gradual acquiescence of the mass of thinking men in the universality of law and of development marks a revolution.

The attitude of religion in face of this new world has been to a great extent an attitude of timidity. It has given at best a reluctant welcome to the new truths which have established themselves. It has been sometimes incredulous and sometimes hostile. It has questioned palpable facts; it has denied certain inferences. Almost any scientific paradox which linked itself to a text of Scripture has been applauded as though it were a truth; almost all scientific truths, the bearing of which upon religion was not immediately seen, have been denounced as heresies.

The attitude of men of science in face of this attitude of religion has been one not of timidity, but of confident triumph. For the new knowledge of our time has

impressed men's minds as nothing has ever impressed them before with a conviction of its certainty. They have absolutely no doubt whatever of its power to hold its ground. And being on the one hand profoundly convinced of the truth of their conclusions, and on the other hand assured, by the voices of a thousand zealous preachers, that Christianity is incompatible with those conclusions—compelled, as it were, to choose between the one and the other—it can hardly be wondered at that some of them have chosen knowledge as their master, rather than Christ. Nor can it be wondered at, that from this attitude of confident triumph they have sometimes passed, sensibly or insensibly, into an attitude which has varied between pity and scorn. They have regarded faith as a kind of intellectual purblindness. They have pictured religion as a cave of Adullam in which the collective weaknesses of mankind have taken refuge. They have taken for granted that we Christians live in the fool's paradise of a phantom heaven. Within the last few weeks one of the chief living "masters of those who know" has told us that He whom we worship, and to whom a moment ago we prayed, is but an idol of the intellect, differing in respect of refinement of conception, but not in respect of reality of being, from a block of wood or stone.

In our meeting to-day, I cannot help seeing an indication that these relations of unfriendliness between religion and modern knowledge are beginning to undergo a change. I am far from thinking that the time has come, or even that it is near at hand, in which it can be

shown that all results of modern knowledge are in harmony with all that Christians hold as matters of faith. The attempted reconciliations seem to me to be unconvincing, because they seem to me to be premature. But believing as I do that both are true, and both Divine, I believe with a profound conviction that there is a harmony which has yet to come.

What grounds are there for such a belief, apart from the vague hope that it may be so?

There are other grounds which appeal strongly to other minds; to my own mind the strongest ground is that which is afforded by historical analogy. This is not the first time in its history that Christianity has found itself in presence of a mass of ideas which at first sight seemed alien to it. Its modern contact with the conclusions of physical science and historical criticism is analogous to its earlier contact with Greek philosophy. The first relations which that earlier contact caused were, like those of its modern counterpart, relations of unfriendliness. Neither philosophy understood Christianity nor Christianity philosophy. Mankind being divided into "philosophers" and "fools," Christianity was "to the Greeks foolishness." There were at least two centuries of misunderstanding and misrepresentation. There were attempted compromises which satisfied no one but their authors. There were slanders and recriminations and caricatures. Philosophical Christians were denounced by their fellow-Christians as heretics. Christianizing philosophers were denounced by their fellow-philosophers as rene-

gades. But the two great forces gradually drew nearer to each other. Christianity entered the schools; philosophers spoke the language of Christians, Christians spoke the language of philosophers; and the "foolishness" of the days of Paul was the dominant "wisdom" of the days of Athanasius. Christianity so thoroughly absorbed metaphysics, and metaphysics effected so firm a lodgment in Christianity, that the mass of men—at least out of Scotland—only know metaphysics in their Christian form.

This historical analogy affords not indeed a proof but yet a presumption that the relations of Christianity to modern knowledge will undergo a similar change. If in this place I may be bold enough to venture upon a scientific illustration, I will say that Christianity presents itself to me as a vast living organism, and round it, floating in the same medium, I see a mass of matter which it has not yet assimilated. The experience of the past leads me to believe that the organism has the capacity to absorb and assimilate that matter in the future. The process of absorption and assimilation has in fact begun. Our presence here to-day is an indication of it. And just as Christianity after its union with Greek philosophy was richer in the variety of its elements, and had a stronger hold upon humanity, so will it be the richer and the stronger for assimilating modern knowledge. It will be the more so because the metaphysical ideas which it incorporated fifteen centuries ago have had almost too exclusive a sway within it; and it will reach vast areas of human life which it has

yet hardly begun to conquer, when it has added to the elements which it has gathered to itself in the past the new elements of this present time.

That is our hope, and the ground of it. Christianity has already shown its capacity to absorb and assimilate ideas which have grown up outside it. It can absorb and assimilate them still. For it is not a crystal in a sealed casket, but a seed, a regenerating force, a principle of life planted in the fruitful ground of human souls. It grows because it comes from God. It changes because it grows. It is continually re-adapting itself to its environment, and it has thereby within it the elements of perpetuity. It underlies all progress, being itself the spirit of progress. It embraces all truth, being itself the spirit of truth. It lives with the world's life. It expands with the world's expansion. The widening thoughts of men reach no sphere into which it does not follow them. Its capacity is as infinite as the universe. It is as undying as the souls which it redeems.

II. The second memorable circumstance in our service to-day is that we are gathered together within these ancient walls, and that we have joined in forms and words of worship which link us by direct historical continuity with the Christians of bygone centuries. The circumstance has not merely a sentimental interest. It is a recognition of the truth that though Christianity grows, it grows from the ancient roots. It is an acted expression of the belief that the complex needs of our time are needs which historical Christianity can satisfy.

This belief needs the more emphatic expression, because there is a not unnatural tendency on the part of those who feel that Christianity is out of touch with some other elements of our time to dissociate themselves to an undue extent from the doctrines and usages which we have received. The tendency comes from the habit of regarding Christianity too exclusively on its intellectual side. The result of it is a philosophy which is not a religion, a morality from which the spiritual elements have been evaporated. The preaching of such a Christianity is a predestined failure. There is not one of us in whom a purely intellectual religion does not sooner or later cause an irrepressible sense of want. We need what our fathers needed. We are linked to them not only by the tie of physical descent, but also by the ties of a common life, and a common death, and a common heritage of pain, of common aspirations, and common temptations, and common sins. Our world is a larger world than theirs, but it is peopled with the same human natures. The stars are farther distant, but their innumerable cold eyes look still upon the same conflict of reason and desire, the same play of mean ambitions and baffled purposes, the same stormy sea of unstilled passions. There is not one of us for whom, as for our fathers, a purely intellectual Christianity would not be inadequate. And to the mass of men such a Christianity would have but little meaning. For to the mass of men life is simply a struggle with circumstances. It means not the pursuit of knowledge, but the pursuit of a livelihood. The struggle varies in

intensity, but it is in its essence the same. It is full of misery. Generation hands on to generation its inheritance of sorrow and of failure. Each generation seems to have its special problems, its special forms of social pressure and of moral perversity. But the underlying needs are constant, and the same. And for these underlying needs Christianity is a permanent satisfaction; but it is the old Christianity and not a new substitute for it. For that old Christianity was not the product of a single age, destined to die with it. The message which it brought from God was for all the ages that were to come. It was not the religion of a single race, stamped with the physiognomy of that race, and fitted only for a single type of men. One of the most remarkable phenomena of its history is that, being the religion of one race, it became the religion of another; and that, being the religion of a primitive state of civilisation, it became the religion of a civilisation as complex as our own. It began by being the religion of a Semitic people, it has become the religion of Aryan peoples. It began by being the religion of men who lived the simple lives of Syrian peasantry; it won its chief triumphs among the proletariat of the great cities of the Roman Empire. The more complex the civilisation, the more intense the struggle for life, the wider was the area of its success.

This experience of its capacity to meet the needs of a varied past is the proof of its capacity to meet the needs of a complex present. And there is one special point of analogy between the times of the first victory

of Christianity and our own, which is to my mind an especial ground of confidence, and an especial reason for treading the ancient paths. It is that there was then as now an endeavour to construct a purely intellectual religion. The place which is now occupied by science was then occupied by Stoicism. It was not an unworthy rival to Christianity. It offered men a conception of God, and an ideal of life, which were hardly less sublime than those of the Gospel. But Stoicism failed. It absorbed the better energies of the few, but it never touched the many. It failed, not because it was an illusion, but because it was insufficient. It appealed only to the intellect. It dealt with men only as thinkers. It assumed a supremacy of reason over impulse. It offered knowledge without emotion, an ethical ideal without an ethical impulse. It wanted a moral lever. It wanted a consolation for suffering. It wanted spiritual power. The secret of that subtle alchemy which transformed a pagan into a Christian world was the simple secret of the Cross of Christ. It satisfied at once the moral needs of the individual and the social needs of the masses. It gave men at once an ideal, and the power to reach it. Its strength lay in its spiritual force. In an age of misery it gave them hope, in an age which stood aghast at its own viciousness it gave them purity, in an age of conflict it gave them brotherhood.

And this is what we want now. In an age in which competition is destroying the finer elements of human association, we want now, as of old, the gospel of

Christian brotherhood. In an age in which luxury, and the selfishness that comes of luxury, are weakening the bonds of self-restraint, we want now, as of old, the gospel of self-sacrifice. In an age in which misery seems to have in this life no alleviation, in which the tired feet pace the dusty roads in vain, and the wan hands are stretched out for bread which is not given, we want now, as of old, the gospel of a Divine communion and an eternal hope. We want the old Gospel and not a new one. In such an age as this, possibly in all ages of the world, knowledge without love and hope, and spiritual strength—nay, even Christianity itself, robbed of its heart—is like what you see sometimes on winter nights, in these northern lands, when on a sudden the dark firmament is aglow with flame, and the lances, as it were, of myriads of angels flash and dart across the sky, and not heaven only, but the very heaven of heavens itself seems to open before your eyes, and to draw you upwards into the infinite depths of splendour which it reveals,—and all the while, on the lone moorland where you stand, the poor body whose eyes are dazed with the glory of it shivers and dies with cold. So it is with our souls. For all our knowledge and all our civilisation we want something which neither knowledge nor civilisation can give. We want the warmth of the Sun of Righteousness to shine upon us with healing in His wings; we want the Gospel of love and hope; we want that of which these ancient walls and these ancient forms of worship are the eloquent and perpetual witnesses, that undying

trinity of benediction—"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost."

III. There is yet a third circumstance of our meeting to-day which is as full of hope as it is of interest. It is one of which I should not speak if it were merely personal to myself; but of which I cannot refrain from speaking, because it has a more than personal importance. For I gather that, in asking a minister of another society than your own to preach, you have wished to indicate an opinion that the barriers which separate the several societies of Christian men are human and not Divine. I do not know of any more important contribution than this that the Christianity of our time can make to the Christianity of the future. For the return of its ancient instinct of brotherhood will be the return of its ancient power. The conquests of the future will be like the conquests of the past. That which won the world for Christ was a simple creed. That which linked men together was the simple love of the brethren. That which has been permanent in doctrine has been not subtle theories but elementary truths; that which has been permanent in organisation has been not the form but the fact of it. Doctrine and organisation have both been essential to Christianity; but it has held its sway not by the elaborateness of its doctrines but by their simplicity, not by the fixity of its organisation but by its elasticity. But just as there has been a singular and most mischievous confusion of idea between the necessity of believing in Christ and the

necessity of believing this or that theory about Him, so has there been a singular and most mischievous confusion of idea between the necessity of having some organisation and the necessity of having this or that particular organisation. It is part of the special task, and I believe that it will be also part of the special glory, of this age to disentangle these separate elements. The task is easier in respect of Christian organisation, because the theory that a particular organisation is of the essence of Christianity has broken down by the silent acquiescence of its defenders in the truth of the facts which subvert it. It was an intelligible and a necessary corollary of that theory that, outside the pale of the particular organisation, there should be not only a defect of the means of grace but also no certain hope of everlasting life. But when it is admitted, as it is admitted, that outside the pale there may be Christian men, with whatever loss of present privilege, in full hope of salvation, it is admitted thereby that no one organisation has a monopoly of either Christian truth or spiritual life.

The logical consequence is clear enough; I look forward to a more express recognition of it; I look forward with the more confidence on account of this service of to-day, because I seem to see in such a service the real solution of the question which must inevitably come:—If the particular form of organisation be of less importance than has been sometimes supposed, what are to be the relations of Christian communities to one another? The solution seems to lie in

the existence of such communities side by side, each recognizing the other's work. It is an idle dream to suppose that all the Christian communities throughout the world will ever be merged into a single visible organisation. The sense of individuality which leads each community to shape its own forms is no less powerful a force in human life than the instinct of association. But the sense of individuality is not incompatible with the recognition of brotherhood. It is no idle dream to conceive of the Christian communities each holding what it prizes as its own, and yet co-operating for the common good; and I look forward with hope to the time when they will no longer turn their swords against each other in an internecine conflict, but each with its own officers, each with its own weapons, and each in its own part of the battle-field, fight under a common banner as one great army of God against the common foes of selfishness, and ignorance, and sin.

It is because of these three circumstances of our service to-day—the fact that religion and modern knowledge seem herein to approach each other, the fact that we are meeting upon the ancient lines of the ancient faith, and the fact that members of different Christian societies are listening to each other's speech—that I gather from it an inspiration and a hope, which comes to me, as I trust it will come also to you, with the power of a new motive, enabling us to go forth to our several ministries in the world, each one of us with a new vigour and a new vitality as a servant of Christ and a son of God.

SERMON XXIII.

THE TRUTH OF TRUTHS.

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THE TRUTH OF TRUTHS.

[*St. Margaret's, Westminster*, 1887.]

"God is love."—1 John iv. 8.

IT is said, and it is probably true, that no two persons ever see the same picture. In every act of sight the image that is actually seen is modified by the personality of him who sees it. It is also said, and it is probably true, that no two persons have the same idea of God. He reveals Himself with a separate revelation to each individual soul. The history of that revelation since consciousness first dawned upon the human spirit is too large to be even touched upon here. The history of it in Christian times may be grouped under two great heads: the revelation of God as a moral being, and the conception of Him as a metaphysical being. There have been, in other words, two great and dominant ideas of God—the one moral and the other metaphysical. Each of them includes innumerable varieties of form, each of them marks a great development, each of them is written large in human history, and each of them fills a large place in the present.

The first great revelation of God was the revelation

of Him as a Moral Governor. There had been earlier conceptions which had pictured Him as a local God, the Protector of the house or the city, of the country or of the race. It was the splendid mission of the Hebrew prophets to lift men into a larger sphere; they preached of Him as the God of the whole earth and as the God of Righteousness. The other conception of God came not from the Jews but from the Greeks. It is the abiding result in modern life of Greek philosophy. The God of the Greek philosophers was not like the God of the Hebrew prophets; He was not the Moral Governor of the Universe; He was the underlying ground and cause of all things; He was pure being; He was infinite and eternal, without passion and without change. It was a marvellous conception; it was a marvellous revelation; it was a revelation of Himself by which God raised men out of that thought of Him in which He was only a magnified man, and led them to recognize Him as being in the realm of the unseen, the spiritual and the eternal.

Now each of these conceptions of God, each of these revelations, is profoundly true; and each of them must have its place in our thought. We must think of Him as the Governor of the Universe, controlling this vast sphere of moral action as He controls this vast sphere of physical action, by laws which cannot be broken, and which are perfectly good. We must think of Him as a Spirit—the eternal ground of all being, of whom are all things, and in whom are all things. It is as necessary to think of God thus as it is that we should

sometimes go out into the night, and at least for a moment or two look upon the infinite heaven, and the innumerable stars, and the unfathomable depths where there are neither suns nor stars, nor mists of light that are gathering into stars.

It is necessary thus to bring ourselves face to face sometimes with the awful vastness of the world, with the infinity above us and beneath us. But it would be as unprofitable as it would be impossible to be always star-gazing, or to make all our knowledge consist in the knowledge of infinity. So it is with this spiritual infinity in whom we move. It is necessary for us sometimes to fix our thoughts upon it; it is necessary for us even to accept the ideas about it which a more metaphysical age than our own has bequeathed to us; for every age in which thought is active forms its own special conceptions, which penetrate its life and thought, and which it transmits by inheritance to its successors; but it is not for us so to press these great ideas of the nature of God (and there has been a tendency so to press them) as, on the one hand, to forget that we see only one aspect of reality at a time; and on the other so to obscure Divine truth by the multitude of human influences that it becomes dark and almost invisible to us.

The conception of God as a moral Governor has, on the one hand, been pressed as though it exhausted all that we know about Him; on the other hand, it has been darkened by analogies from human laws, until the supreme conception of a God of righteousness has been

transmuted into a conception of one who curses where even men would bless, and who punishes where even men would pardon. And the conception of Him as infinite and eternal and unchangeable has been robbed of almost all positive meaning, so that with all the straining of a man's thought he does but pass, as he thinks of God, from the sense of infinite darkness to the sense of infinite silence, and from the sense of infinite silence to the sense of infinite cold.

I recall you, my brethren, to the simpler, the loftier, the more Christian idea of God which is revealed to us in to-day's Epistle. It is an instance of the truth that the simplest conceptions are always the deepest. It is no elaborate creed, it requires no hard thinking; it involves no training in philosophy before you can understand it. Its three short words are like a lightning flash, that open up to us an infinite heaven of heavens through the intense darkness of the clouds that hang over human life. It speaks straight to our human nature. It tells us, that in the awful Maker of all things seen and unseen, in the Infinite, the Absolute, the Eternal, there is something like this heart that beats, there is something like that which draws the mother to the son and the sister to the brother, that the most human part of us is also the most Divine—that it is that which "moves the sun and all the stars," for "God is love." And I recall you this simple truth about God, because it is at once one of the most practical of truths and one of the most necessary for our time.

It has been said, and it is often true, that no dis-

courses are more barren than discourses on the being and attributes of God—that they are the very type of dry divinity. They need not be so. They may be among the most fruitful: they are among the most necessary. They are not needed to prove to us that there is a God, or that He is a true and holy God, but they are needed to impress His nature upon us, His presence, and His work. We all in some sense believe in God; we should not be here if we did not; but there lingers in the souls of many of us some echo of the ancient phrases which lead us to picture Him as enthroned in some far-off heaven. We need to be reminded that "He is not far from every one of us," and we need not only the sense that God is here, but also that He is here with all the fulness of His being. It is not a formless and impassive spirit that is near to us, not a blank void; but the infinitely holy, the infinitely true, the infinitely kind. It is this that gives the thought of God a place in practical life. There is no single form or phase of His being which does not come to us, when we realise it, and in proportion to the vividness with which we realise it, with the force of a supreme motive.

We think of God, for example, as infinitely true. If we did but realise this as we might, if we were penetrated through and through with the thought of it; if, just as false words were shaping themselves into speech, we felt that "God is near; God, who is infinitely true, knows what I think and what I am about to say," would you dare to tell a lie? If we thought of God as infinitely holy, if we did but realise this as we might,

if the sense of it penetrated us as the sunlight penetrates us, if we realised it as vividly as we realise that fire will burn or water drown, should we dare to think an unholy thought or to do an unholy deed?

So it is with this element of His nature which we call love. I speak of it this afternoon, not only because to-day's service suggests it, but because it is at once the most practical of truths and the most necessary now. It is a special truth for our time. It contains the Gospel that we need; it comes to our sadness as a Gospel of consolation; it comes to our restlessness as a Gospel of repose. It is in this latter aspect that I wish for a moment or two to speak of it, for the restlessness of our time is an even more significant feature of it than its misery. It is also more difficult to deal with. For material want there is material alleviation; we can feed the hungry, we can clothe the naked, we can nurse the sick, but there is that about our time, and foremost among the features of our time, which is beyond material relief. I will not now speak of the awful strain that comes of its complex civilisation, of its growing numbers, of its quickened competition, and of its aroused ambition; nor will I now speak of the fermenting of new thoughts that come of new knowledge: I will speak only of its social unrest. There are many here who are not in want: there are many here who come from well-furnished houses with a well-provided table, who, when compared with the mass of men, are rich, and comfortable, and secure, and yet whose life is a fever of unrest. You find, some of you,

brethren, but little comfort in the thought of God, because He seems to you to be too far off, because you think of Him in only one aspect of His nature, as the infinite justice or the infinite power: there are moments of your lives at which the rush and strain of them seem to be intolerable; you kill excitement by excitement, and you staunch the wound of one baffled ambition by another.

To you, brethren, you who feel most of all the strain and stir of life, this revelation of God as love comes with a singular power, for it is the Gospel of repose. Can you not remember when you were children, tired with the fatigue of play, you threw yourselves into your mother's arms supremely conscious of your mother's love, and felt, as you sank to happy sleep, the exquisite delight of secure and perfect rest? Can you not, now that you are men and women, be children, once again in the arms of the Eternal Father, and feel close to you the infinite love of Him who knows your sadness, your weariness, and your unrest, and in whose love you may find a perfect repose? It was a true instinct, though an exaggerated one, which led men ages ago to leave the common life of the world, the common life of ambition and struggle and despair, and spend their lives in some solitary spot, and think only, for days and years, until death brought them the perfect vision of the love of God.

There was a deep human need underlying this. It is the same need that you feel. You, too, are tired, as they were, with the noise and stir and strife; tired as

they were with the factiousness of political party feeling, with the meanness of social ambition, with the chicanery of commerce, where each man is an Ishmael, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. And to you the same satisfaction is possible. It can be but for a moment or two, not for a lifetime, not for the solitude of years and years, but just for a moment or two now and again I would ask the wise man to forget his wisdom, and the strong man to forget his strength. Just for a moment or two where the fight is thickest I would have you be lost to the world of sense and of common life; I would ask you to rise, as the spirit can, clear of the awful torrent and swirl of life, to have your spirit resting in the eternal Father who loves you, close to your soul of souls. I would have you feel the awful sense of spiritual rest and spiritual strength as you know that God is near, that God is yours, and that, like the Father who went forth to meet the prodigal, so He comes to welcome you back even from sin, until you feel the warmth of the Father's breast and rest in His passionless peace.

> For the soul that is close to God,
> In the folded wings of prayer,
> Passion no more can vex,
> Infinite peace is there.

I should be glad if it had been possible for me to go on, as the Apostle goes on in the following verse, to speak of the supreme manifestation of the love of God in sending His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him; but I must be content

to-day with the truth which lies behind the incarnation and explains it, and I am the more content because it is not uncommon for the force of that great truth of the love of God to be weakened by dispersion. We let our thoughts rest on some one of the innumerable ways in which that love has shown itself: it is well that we should do so; but it is well also that we should sometimes simply think: "The Father Himself loveth you." It is as though we stood in front of some sublime panorama of Alpine scenery, some vast amphitheatre in which the splendour of the dazzling snow, and the rose-red granite, and the purple shadows, made us forget that all the glory and the beauty of it were but forms and manifestations of the pure and colourless sunlight. So it is that all Christian truths are forms and manifestations of this supreme truth of the love of God. To that truth of truths I recall you, my brethren, to-day. In the sublime and awful splendour of it I would bid you rest. About some other truths we may differ; in this, at least, we agree. Into some other truths there may enter elements of doubt which weaken their force as motives of conduct, but to-day let the sublime revelation of St. John's Epistle link us together in a perfect concord, and let it be for us the sublime inspiration of a constraining motive and a supreme repose to know that the Father Himself loveth us, for "God is love."

SERMON XXIV.

THE RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES OF OUR TIME.

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[*University of Oxford*, 1888.]

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders and they will tell thee."—DEUT. xxxii. 7.

IT might appear a rather barren truism to say that religions are relative to states of mind. But the truism ceases to be barren when it is seen to involve the truth that the religion of an individual is the outcome and expression of the whole nature of that individual; and that the religion of an age is, in a similar way, the outcome and expression of the whole human phenomena of that age. And since the natures of men who co-exist at any given time differ widely, the forms of religion which are relative to them differ also; and since the general features of one age differ from those of another in respect of their social, their moral, and their intellectual phenomena, so do they differ also in respect of their religion.

It is, therefore, natural to expect that our own age, which has a not less strongly-marked individuality than any age which has preceded it in respect of its

social and its intellectual life, should have strongly-marked characteristics also in respect of its religion.

I spoke on a previous occasion of one of these characteristics of its religion, its love of fact, its revolt against theological speculation. That characteristic is mainly negative: our time stands in a position of antithesis and opposition to previous times. But a negative attitude in religion is partial and temporary. It affects not all men, but only some. It affects an age which it affects at all only as a passing phenomenon. The view, therefore, of our age, as standing in an attitude of antithesis to a previous age, is necessarily inadequate. It is also only temporary: it represents a feature of our time which must inevitably pass away.

It is, therefore, necessary to examine the other side of the picture, and to find out in what positive ways the religion of our time tends to express itself. It is also desirable, in a great centre of thought and of education, not only to see what the tendencies are, but also to give them, in whatever degree may be possible, a right direction.

In what positive ways, then, I will ask, are the religious phenomena of our time shaping themselves, and in what ways can we in Oxford take our appropriate part in helping their development?

Its most obvious characteristic is that it is an age of stir and movement. The pulses of men seem to beat with a preternatural quickness. Their feet move busily along the crowded ways. Its type is a London street;

the loiterers are few; there is a constantly moving stream; almost everyone is in earnest and in haste. It is inevitable that this activity should seek to find a field for its exercise within the sphere of religion; and it is doing so in more ways than one.

1. The activity of our time is finding an adequate and appropriate field for its exercise within the religious sphere in works of philanthropy and social improvement. It was here that the first signs of religious awakening showed themselves nearly a century ago. It went hand in hand with the spirit of travel and trade and colonisation in sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, raising the level not only of religious but of social and moral and individual life among the undeveloped races of mankind. It went hand in hand with the new impulse towards education, founding schools, training teachers, and circulating books. It has in more recent times gone hand in hand with the effort to deal with the whole fabric of our complex civilisation. It has excited and stimulated and directed the effort to cure, or at least to palliate, the evils which that civilisation has either caused or intensified; efforts which are not the less religious or the less Christian, because they do not always use Christian phraseology, or bear a religious name. There are few more hopeful signs, either for Christianity or for society, than that the two should thus come again into close contact, that religion should no longer fix its eyes upon the clouds, or walk in sombre garments through the busy haunts of men crying out, "*Memento mori.*" There are few

more hopeful signs than that Christianity in this form should have taken so strong a hold upon this University, that colleges should have missions attached to them, and that some of the ablest of the younger generation should be actually living among those whom they desire to elevate, and preaching, not a gospel of sermons, but a gospel of active sympathy and of personal service.

In all this the religious activity of our time has followed the path of primitive ages. The practical activity of Christianity preceded its intellectual activity. It tried to save the world before it began to instruct the world. It saved the world by sympathy and help, not less than by the splendid vision which it revealed of an ever-present Father, and of a life in the world to come.

2. But social efforts are not possible to all men, nor do they absorb all the energies even of those who take part in them. There is a non-practical element in every man's soul. There is always a non-practical element in society. The intellectual activity of our time is an even more marked characteristic than its practical activity. It is expressing itself in a thousand new forms, it is inspired by a new spirit, it is working by new methods. And the question which I propose briefly to answer is this: What appropriate and adequate field exists for that activity within the religious sphere? What positive work does religion offer for the intellect of our age?

The fields which lie before it are many in number.

The choice of the field must depend, no doubt, to some extent, on the personal temperament of the worker. There are some men who would still occupy themselves with the metaphysics of religion, discussing the *à priori* possibility of miracles, of revelation, of evolution. There are some men, again, who would occupy themselves with the psychology of the religious emotions, analysing, by the aid of physiology and anthropology, their origin, their nature, and their form. But the field to which I desire to direct attention as being more appropriate to our time than any other, and more adequate, suits the case which will, I believe, be found more typical and more distinctive than any other, and which will, therefore, be applicable to by far the largest number of individuals. It is that of a man who, without waiting to solve the problem of miracles, or to master, if indeed it be possible to master, the psychology of the religious emotions, simply asks, and wishes to know, not, What is Christianity?—for a man need not have advanced far along the path of life to have found out already that to that question there will be as many answers as there will be speakers—but, How am I to find out what Christianity is?

The answer which I venture to give is one which I venture to give with a special confidence, because it has been frequently given before from this place by men whose names will always be held in honour in this University.

It is, in short, that the best field for the intellectual activity of our time is to be found in Christian history,

and that a generation which would find out what Christianity is must first find out what it has been.

It is the answer which was given fifty years ago by the earliest of those who were afterwards known as Tractarians. The school which then arose was a reaction against a school of speculation, which constructed an elaborate and scholastic theology on the basis of an arbitrary exegesis. They reasserted the principle that Christianity has had a past, and that it is not given to each succeeding generation to start afresh with new interpretations and a new superstructure. They appealed to Christian antiquity, and they applied themselves to its study. They produced in the Library of the Fathers an important and memorable contribution to historical knowledge; and it is probable that if they had gone on as they began, we should not see before us, as we see now, the vast fields of Christian history ripe for an ungathered harvest. But their aim was, from the first, rather polemical than purely historical. They assumed that the doctrines and usages of Christian antiquity were intended to be permanent; and they believed that those doctrines and usages would be found to be, in all essential points, preserved in the doctrines and usages of the Reformed Church of England. They studied history, in other words, with a purpose; and this purpose, which would have been secondary to a purely historical student, became primary to them. They were entangled in controversies on the right hand and on the left; and before the first generation of them had lived half their

life, the historical inquiry into the earlier strata of Christian beliefs was merged in an effort to show the continuity of corporate existence and of ritual usage with the Christendom of the middle ages.

The result is that historical Christianity comes to most men now robed in the splendid vestments of the Mediæval Church. It fascinates some men by the beauty of its external form. It is in harmony with, and gives an expression to, the revived æstheticism of our time. But the vast hold which it has upon men comes less from the charm of its adornments, than from its claiming to satisfy that which is a true instinct of our time—the clinging to a religion which is not only of our time, but the expression in our time of the Christianity of the past. And it is to no slight degree because the success of what I may term mediævalism shows this instinct to exist, that I believe the answer which I have ventured to give to the main inquiry to be not only true in general, but also the satisfaction of a present need.

It is to the study of Christian history, then, that I invite attention, as the most fruitful and promising field within the sphere of religion for the intellectual activity of our time. It is almost wholly virgin soil. It seems a paradox to say so. There are thousands upon thousands of histories. There have been hundreds upon hundreds of historians. But for all that the fields of Christian history are new, as, until recently, all fields of history were new, because they need new research and the application of new methods.

It is this which gives to it its present charm. It would be neither appropriate nor adequate as a field for the intellectual activity of our time if it simply promised a revised edition, with new notes, of a history which had been written before. It promises not only new results, but also a new meaning. The past of Christianity has been studied for the most part, so far, as a collection of antiquities, or a collection of biographies. Ecclesiastical histories are, for the most part, either museums or biographical dictionaries. They have, as such, whatever interest antiquities and biographies have, as such. I am far from denying that such an interest exists, and that it is legitimate. But it is not everyone who cares to walk, as it were, in the streets of a disinterred city, or to estimate the characters of even the greatest heroes of the past. Ecclesiastical history, so far as it gives men this, is only on a level with other history. The interest which it creates is confined to a limited class, and it affects that class only in a limited degree.

But that which lies before us in Christian history, and which lies before us, moreover, as an object not merely of legitimate interest, but of supreme and absorbing importance, is the revelation which it affords of the nature of Christianity, by being itself the revelation of God.

I cannot now do more than indicate the bare outlines of the field.

We have to study (1) the recorded facts, and especially those of original Christianity. They are simple

and yet complex. They seem to lie on the surface, and yet they are hard to find. This first and most necessary step of ascertaining them requires the aid of the highest developments of the sciences of philology, and the logic of history; and the developments of these sciences in our day has been a necessary preliminary to the study of Christianity.

(2) We have to find out the relation of those facts, when we have ascertained them, to the whole mass of contemporary facts. We have to bear in mind the proposition with which we started, that religion is the outcome and expression of the old nature of a man, and of the whole human phenomena of religion, not in isolation, but as parts of a whole

(3) We have to find out the attitudes of mind in which sucessive generations have stood to the original facts; and we have, further, to consider the causes of those attitudes. We find in successive generations changes in both belief and practice. We cannot assume that all such changes are wrong. We cannot believe in an arrested development. We cannot believe that the Spirit of God ceased at some one moment of history to speak to men. We cannot believe that the supreme Christian duty of one age is to attempt the impossible task of reproducing the whole intellectual scenery of another age. We are impelled to see in the new attitudes of successive ages, new forms and phases of truth, and to study them as parts of the revelation of God.

It is a study as vast as it is interesting. The final

results are not for us or for our time. But there are general results which may come to us in our time apart from the special results of our inquiry into particular beliefs, or the final results which are yet on an unseen horizon.

In the first place we shall learn that there is a Christianity which is not of time or place. We shall find that the Christianity of all good men through all the Christian ages has been in its essence one. We shall be able, if we will, to appropriate that simple essence to ourselves. We shall find that deep down in the souls of men the primitive faith has lived. We shall find that primitive faith comprehended and expressed in all the ages, in that which was first given to us as a trinity of benedictions, and which has become the most spiritual as well as the most abiding of creeds: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost."

In the second place we shall not only learn the permanence of Christianity, but its variety. We shall distrust the finality of our own judgment or the judgment of our own contemporaries, because we shall see that almost every writer, in almost every age, has felt the same confidence, and we shall also see that each generation, as it passes a judgment of incompleteness upon its predecessors, anticipates the inevitable judgment which must one day be passed upon itself. We shall infer that speculations and practices which were freely allowed in the far-off past, cannot be incompatible with admission into the Kingdom of Heaven. We

shall infer also that speculations and practices which were not unknown in that far-off past, however natural an outcome of succeeding times, cannot be in themselves vital. And as we watch the changes, and trace the causes of them, the conviction will become the more certain that the world of grace is no less diverse in its forms than the world of nature, and that all the vast and varied panorama, as it moves slowly before our view, is a vision of God, revealing Himself at sundry times, and in divers manners, to the souls of men.

Two other results will follow these in that part of us which, if so incongruous a word as "part" be allowed in regard to human nature at all, may be specially called religious.

The one is an increased spirituality. A religion lives and grows in proportion as it satisfies spiritual needs. It must show itself in active life in benevolence, in the effort to do good. It must show itself in the intellectual life as the effort to find out what is true. It must show itself in the moral life as the effort to kill the baser part of us, to crush the tyranny of passion and desire. But underneath these several modes and expressions of it, there must be, if there be religion at all, the life of the Spirit. There must be, if not always, yet in moments of supreme need, that sublime transcending of the earthly life, that awful touching of the finite by the infinite, which we call communion with God. The degree to which a form of religion can satisfy this need is the measure alike of its reality, and of its power.

And Christian history is the knowledge of God revealing Himself in the generations of men, which intensifies our spiritual life and satisfies this spiritual need, because it gives us not a dead inheritance of past beliefs, but a close and continual contact with the living Father.

The other result is the sense of repose. Theology thrives in the stir and tumult of the battlefield. Religion seeks for calm. The progress of theology, like all intellectual progress, is "progress by antagonism." Its formula is thesis, antithesis, synthesis. But a religion that is purely or mainly critical, purely or mainly antithetical, is no religion at all. Religion must have repose.

There have been no doubt at many periods in the history of religion a tendency to exaggerate this element of repose. In the ideal of the perfect life of which men dreamt, while it was still possible for dreamers to dream their dreams, the very heaven of heavens itself was pictured as an unstirred calm. It was a fancy of an old Greek interpreter that in the "Sea of glass like unto crystal," which St. John saw before the throne of God, each separate drop was a separate soul, which found its supreme and eternal felicity in lying for ever and for ever in the infinite stillness of that glassy sea, and being for ever and for ever the mirror of the eternal and perfect light. The heaven to which some of us aspire would be not that glassy sea, but a world made bright with the quick movement of the white-winged messengers moving

without rest in the service of God. It may be that in that unwearied world there will be no need of rest: it may be that the true picture of the souls in glory is the picture of those who are—

> Still becoming, more than being,
> Apprehending, more than seeing,
> Feeling as from orb to orb,
> On their awful course they run,
> How their souls new light absorb
> From the self-existent One.

But at least, here upon earth we seek for rest, and we cling to a religion that gives us rest. It is because we are storm-tossed on the "waves of this troublesome world;" it is because the strongest of us faint and are weary, and some of us utterly fail; it is because we are bowed down by its weariness, and worn by its sadness, and perplexed by its doubts,—that we seek, and do not seek in vain, the infinite peace of God. Before a religion can give this, it must have certainty. To some men, it may be the loftiest and happiest of God's children, the certainty of an internal conviction is sufficient and supreme. But the mass of men crave for an external guarantee. They hear the dissonant voices of preachers, each one proclaiming the certainty of his own belief. They have no time to examine the credentials for themselves. Some of them are led by a true instinct, though I believe it to be wholly mistaken in its direction, to the Church of Rome. They see the patent fact that in these, or not unlike, faiths and forms generation after generation has worshipped God.

They feel, inside the gates of the vast and ancient temple which receives them, an infinite security and an infinite repose. Their instinct is true, though it leads them to an illusion. But what Rome offers, history gives. What Rome offers, every investigation weakens. What history gives, every new investigation makes more certain. Behind us are nineteen centuries of continuous revelation. In all these nineteen centuries we are in contact with the Spirit of God, who reveals Himself in them. The result is a certainty and a repose which nothing can disturb: for as the supreme outcome of our search we come upon those truths, which, being in all ages deep-seated in the minds of holy men, are also eternal in the heavens.

It is to this great study, to which I believe the intellectual activity to be drifting, and which offers to that activity a worthy and an appropriate field, that I invite, especially, you younger men, who have your lives before you, who are stirred by the sense of religion, and who pray to live a life worthy of yourselves, and of your inheritance. "Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask thy father and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."

SERMON XXV.

THE THREEFOLD BENEDICTION.

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[*Westminster Abbey, Trinity Sunday*, 1888.]

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."—2 Cor. xiii. 14.

IT is remarkable that one of the two most explicit recognitions of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity in the New Testament should be in the form of a benediction. The fact is itself a sermon. It is full of instructive lessons. It tells us, above all, that the revelation of the Trinity is a revelation not of an object of speculation, but of a living truth. It recalls us from metaphysics to life. It reminds us that in our world of effort and failure we need the varied help of God. It reveals to us that God, who in His trinity of Persons is very near to us, is near to us with a trinity of blessings.

He reveals Himself to us as a trinity of Persons: the Eternal Father, of whom we are the children; the Eternal Son, who brings back to us our lost sonship; the Eternal Spirit, by whom we and all things live, are severally close to us. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

It is a trinity of benedictions. The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, the fellowship of the Spirit, come each of them round us, and enfold us in the wings of blessing. And yet they are not three benedictions, but one. The love, and the grace, and the fellowship are not different and apart; but one and the same.

The Apostle begins with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, because that seems to be nearer to us; it is, as it were, the doorway through which we pass to the sense of the love of God. Grace means "gift." It was a word which seemed best to sum up that which Jesus Christ did for us. It was a short technical expression which included at once redemption and atonement, the knowledge of God, and the hope of eternal life. The world had been seeking for redemption from the power of the body which held the spirit as its slave, for some visible sign and manifestation that conquest was possible. It had been seeking for certain knowledge, for some sure stairway into the far-off heaven which pure souls saw in the infinite heights above them and which they could not reach; it had been seeking for light and for hope; for it had struggled with its pain, it had struggled with its sorrow, with the problem of its disappointment and its failure —it could not always beat the air in a fruitless battle: and there was coming over them, as the slow mist creeps over the fair landscape in an autumn afternoon, the sense of a supreme despair.

And to men came the grace, the gift which Jesus

Christ brought of a Divine knowledge, of a Divine manifestation of conquest over the flesh, of a Divine hope, which was not to vanish—not a dim, but a sure and certain, faith that God was in the world, and had not left us to be the struggling but inevitable prey of passion, and darkness, and death. It was the sense of a Divine sonship.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" was also, and thereby, "the love of God." There are many Christian men who have been so long the slaves of the ideas which Roman law brought into Western Christianity, that the old truth seems so unfamiliar as to be almost new: "The Father Himself loveth you." The very significance of the word Father is lost to us. We speak of the Almighty, of Providence, as though He were not a person, but an abstraction. Many think of Him as the Supreme Judge and Supreme Ruler, and forget the infinite depths of love. He reveals Himself to us as a father; as a father He loves us. We measure His love by the love that those of us who are fathers feel, that all of us who are sons have felt. He loved us in infinitely greater degree, but in some way like the way in which we love our children. He forgives us when we go back to Him and throw our arms round about Him, as it were, and tell Him that we know we were wrong. He helps us on our way when we tend to stumble; He gives us, as it were, a Father's arm upon which to lean, and a Father's hand to guide us through the darkness. He not only loves us but He loves us all as children. The benediction is the

sense of it. The love of the Father is like the sun which shines in the heaven, it shines alike upon one field and another; but upon one field is a crop of grain, upon another is a crop of useless and baleful weeds: the difference lies not in the sunshine but in the preparation of the ground. So it is with human souls. The love of the Father comes to us all, but the blessing of that love comes to us in proportion as we till the soil of our souls. It is dependent so far upon our effort; it comes not to supersede our labour but to call it forth and to bless it. He blesses us in proportion as we are ready for His blessing—in proportion as we prepare our souls to receive it. And He helps us to prepare them.

And so "the love of God" becomes "the fellowship of the Holy Spirit." The eternal Father has not placed His love in some infinitely distant space, to blaze and burn like Sirius in some field of the universe which we can only see in the distance, which touches us with no warmth, which enlightens us with no knowledge, and which only reveals to us the unimaginable vastness of His power. He has not mocked us with a panorama of sunlight, and the luxuriant growths that come of sunlight, passing as it were like a vast moving spectacle before our eyes. He comes close to us; He holds communion with us; He touches us with warmth. It is the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; He enlightens us with His light; He comes close to us with the awful revelation of His infinity. And then, in close communion with us, He whispers to us with tenderness,

as of a mother to her son, "I, God, am yours; I, your God, am your Father and love you; I, your God, am your Saviour and have redeemed you; I, your God, am your Helper and can sustain you."

Thus it is that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost" are not three benedictions, but only three forms of one. The sense of the gift of a Divine Sonship, the sense of the love of a Divine Father, the sense of a Divine communion, are but the prismatic colours of one perfect light.

But I feel almost a sense of paralysis as I draw this feeble sketch of what these words mean. They are the whole Gospel; they are all that Paul preached. They are all that Paul's Master and ours revealed. They burn within me; and they burn within me because I want you also to feel their supreme, their awful benediction. What do I want, what do you want for this world and for the worlds beyond the world, but the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost"? If you ask me to translate all that into the language of philosophy; if you tell me that no ray of that Divine light can reach my soul until I have told you of what chemical elements it is composed, I answer, Nay. The sun was shining in the heavens, revealing to the world the infinite beauty of form and colour, for untold ages before its rays were analyzed by the prism. It was bringing forth verdure by its warmth for untold ages before it was found out that oceans of hydrogen surge upon its

surface, and that its heat like its light is a mode of motion. What you and I want, what you and I have, is not the bare truth that there is a sun, but the sense of his warmth. What you and I want, and what you and I have, is not an analysis of what the idea of God means, but the sense that there is a Father who loves us, the sense that there is a God who holds communion with us.

I will ask you thus to think of the Trinity to-day. I will ask you to let the thought of God, as He is revealed to us, be with you, not as a dogma, but as an ever-present benediction. I will ask you to pray each for himself the prayer which the Apostle prayed for himself and for all the world. It is not a selfish prayer. The benediction of God is like the sunlight which must radiate back again from all those upon whom it shines. The love of the Father cannot be in our hearts without shining, it must needs shine upon our fellow-men. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be hid. The fellowship of the Divine Spirit is a sharing in His Divine activity, in an unresting and untiring life, always moving, because motion and not rest is the essence of His nature—always moving with a blessing. There are some men who seem to think that the love of God is so personal, so private a possession, that it can be, as it were, locked up in a casket, upon which they may gaze with a selfish and exclusive adoration, but which none can see but themselves.

It was a dream of many men in old times—it is a

dream of some men now—that the highest revelation of God to man was not only made to the individual soul, but also made so personally and individually that no one else could know that it had been made; and they went into the desert, or they lived in their solitary cells, that they might spend their lives in adoration, in private communion with God. Can you conceive their theory to be true, can you conceive that if this prayer of the Apostle were fully answered for every one of us it would turn us all into silent mystics; that the stir of life would be checked by the presence of the Divine benediction; that men would cease to move and would stand still for ever gazing upon the infinite Son? It cannot be: the blessing of God, if it be within us, must shine forth from us. No one can see God face to face without his own face shining. No one can have within him this supreme benediction of the love of God without moving, as the love of God is always moving, in an unresting activity.

The activity takes innumerable forms. It sometimes takes the form of the activity of knowledge. In some men the communion of the Holy Ghost is a communion of insight. They cannot rest until they know; they cannot rest when they know until they have told their fellows; and they cannot rest when they have told their fellows until they have plunged again and again into the deep seas of the unknown, and have brought up new pearls of knowledge that men may again and again be thankful. It sometimes shows itself within us in the activity of benevolence. The fellowship of the Holy

Ghost is a fellowship of beneficence. It stirs men to a sense of the wants of others, and to effort to help them. The love of God shines out with the warmth of a Divine fire upon those who are sick, and those who are weak, and those who are needy, and those who are in distress. It sends men into far-off lands, burning with enthusiasm, to bring the degraded populations of our race to a higher level. It sends men into the homes of the poor that they may be helped to rise to a higher life, to a higher status, that their lives may be brightened and blest. It stirs men to move about the common society which is around them, and touch every soul that comes in contact with them with love and sympathy. It sometimes shows itself within us as the activity of moral growth.

The fellowship of the Holy Ghost is a fellowship of goodness. It never rests with being what it is: it is always striving to be better. And if it were given to me to pray for one benediction more than another, for one form of Divine fellowship more than another, I should pray for this benediction and the fellowship of spiritual growth. I should pray, if I had but one thing to pray for, not for the activity of knowledge (though I value knowledge), not for the activity of doing good, but for the activity of spiritual growth. I should pray that my light might, by the help of God, so shine before men that they might glorify our Father who is in heaven. I should pray for this because it gathers up all else into itself.

To be good is to do good. To attempt to do good

without being good is to beat the air. Do you suppose that your missionaries will convert the heathen world while the Christian men and women who live surrounded by heathen society live the lives not of the Christian ideal but of heathen practice? Do you suppose that you who are fathers and mothers, for all your precepts and your kindness, your children will grow up to be what you want them if, day by day, in your common intercourse with them, with one another, with the society in which you move, you show yourselves irritable and uncharitable and censorious; if you show that your life has no loftier aim than commercial, or literary, or social success; if in ten thousand little ways there shines out from you upon them, not the pure light of the Divine benediction of charity and truth and self-control, but the baneful fires of selfishness and unreality, of an unrestrained appetite and an ungoverned tongue?

If God's benediction be upon us, if the communion of the Holy Ghost be really ours, it must shine out in ten thousand ways in our daily lives.

When we pray, therefore, this prayer for the trinity of benedictions, we are praying not a selfish prayer, but a prayer for others as well as for ourselves. It is not given to us to determine the form in which the blessing of God shall be manifested in us. He has given to everyone of us his own separate capacity, his own separate powers, and He worketh in each of us severally as He will.

But it is given to us as we think of God to think of

Him as blessing us. It is given to us to pray for one another this prayer of the Apostle, that His grace, His love, His communion, may be always with us. And the special purpose of to-day's festival is not that we may once more lose ourselves in the mazes of speculation in which the Greeks of old time loved to wander, but that just for a moment or two we may pause upon our journey to drink a new draught of the well of life; that just for a moment or two we may, like Moses, gaze upon some part of the infinite glory and bow our heads in adoration of the infinite and ineffable majesty, and then come down, as it were, from the height into our common life, move among our fellow-men, baptized with the baptism of this threefold benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost."

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